THE
INDO-TIBETANS

The Indo-Tibetan and Mongoloid Problem
in the Southern Himalaya and North-Northeast India

with 74 Illustrations
and one Map

By
Fr. Matthias Hermanns

[Title Page]
[p.i]

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Bandra, Bombay 20

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Dedicated

to

Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society

on the occasion of its

Sārdhaśatābdī (150th Anniversary) *Celebrations*

1804 — 1954

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Printed by J. S. Pereira at the Examiner Press, Bombay, and Published by
K. L. Fernandes, Bandra, Bombay 20.
1954

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AK5 Lepcha AK5
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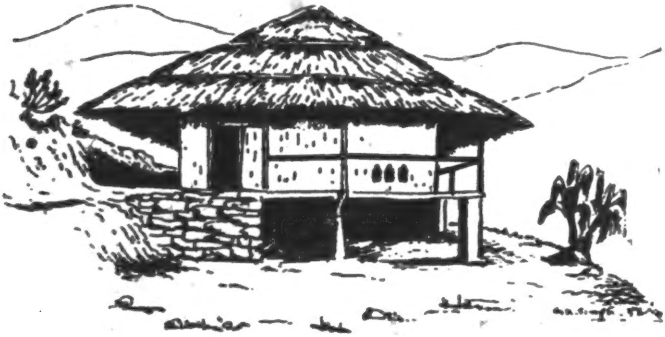

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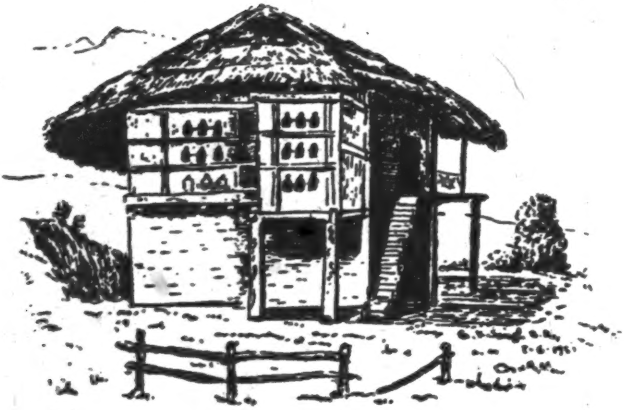

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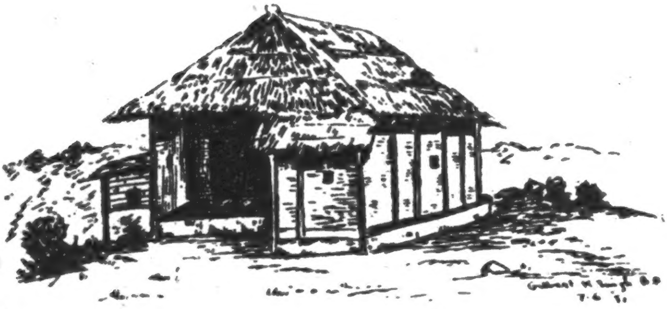

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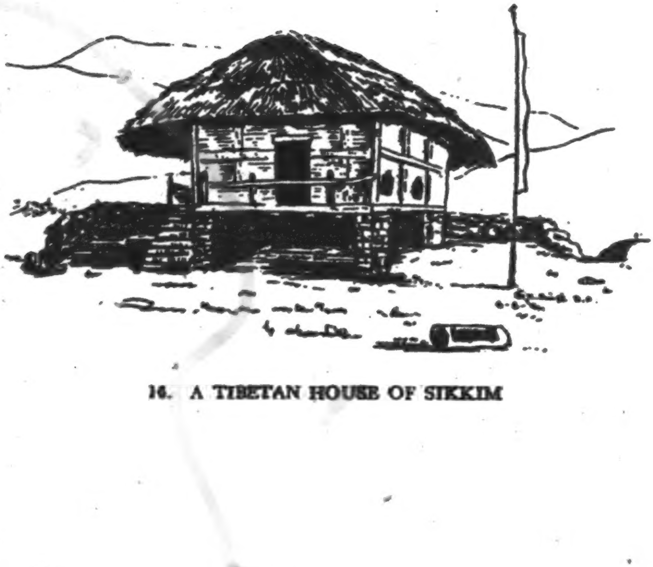

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CHAPTER III

THE MOUNTAIN TRIBES OF SIKKIM

A. THE LEPCHAS

The Lapches or Lepchas are supposed to be the original 101
inhabitants of Sikkim. They call themselves Rong; the
Tibetans call them Mon, and the Bhutanese, Meri. The
Mongoloid problem can best be studied through the Lepchas
of the Southern Himalayas and hence they are dealt with
more thoroughly.

According to one opinion the Lepchas are supposed 173
to have come not from Tibet, but from the east of the mountains
from Assam and Upper Burma.[22] Their own tradition, how-
ever, states that their original home was in the neighbourhood [103]
of the great mountain, Kang-chen-mdzod-lnga[23] the second
highest mountain in the world. That is the Tibetan name
and means the "Great Glacier of the Five Store-rooms."
The Lepcha name for the mountain is, "King-tzum-song-bu."
King-tzum means "Highest part of the forehead," song-bu
means "the highest." Literally it means, "the highest over
our head." This Lepcha name is reproduced phonetically
by the Tibetans as "Kang-chen-mdzod-lnga," which has
quite a different meaning. This snow-covered mountain has [776]
an important part to play as the habitat of the spirits. King-
tzum-rum is the god of happiness; Rum-king-tzum is the
god of fate.[24] From it the Lepchas derive the name Rong,
by which they are known. Rong means "peak" or "mountain
peak" and has the same significance as the word Arong.

Another tradition has it that the place of their origin is
on the holy mountain Kailasa (Ti se) way up in Tibet. On
the mountain is the stone Ne-long which bears the footprints [778]
of Buddha and of animals. The god, Pum-rum, protector of [776]
the hunters, lives there. Pum-rum is also another name for
the Supreme God of the Lepchas as we shall soon see. The

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[22] J. C. White, Sikkim and Bhutan, London, 1909, p. 7.

[23] Kangchenjunga, Fig. 17 & 18.

[24] G. B. Mainwaring and A. Grünwedel, Dictionary of the Lepcha Language, Berlin 1898, 17a, 256 b.

178 oldest homeland bears the name Damsang. We have here an inkling of the Tibetan Lama influence, which, as in Hindu tradition, links the original homeland with the holy district. Since the King-tzum-song-bu is very closely linked with the myths of the Lepchas we shall go more deeply into a study of it.

(*a*) Myths of the Creation of the World

773 776 The myths of the creation are of special importance. "Create" in the Lepcha language is called "ayit" or "it" in its abbreviated form. Another word for create is "de-bo." "It-rum" or "de-rum" means "god of creation" ; "Rum" by itself means "god." "Pum-thing-rum" signifies the same. "Pum bo" means "Principal," "Chief," "God." The name "It-bo" or "It-bo-mu" is again taken from the creative action of god. Other names are, "Ta-she-thing," "Sa-dzug-rum." The latter are connected with the sun god and are used by some as the emblem of the Supreme God.

The following is the myth about creation : In ancient times Rum created a great expanse of water. Nothing else existed at the time. Then he created on the bed of the water the fish "ngo." Next he formed three pairs of deities who lay down crosswise on the fish. The first of the pairs were Rug-lu and Rug-lom, and after them were Mon-li and Röng-gul, Pö-ril and Pö-dong. These are three pairs of male and female deities. Over these were fashioned Söm-li and Söm-nag-mön-mu, a couple who as man and wife are supposed to belong to the human race. They all carried the earth which rested on them in the form of a dish. The slightest movement of the fish resulted in earthquakes. Rum then created the great mountains of the earth, the chief of which is King-tzum-song-bu ; then four more peaks, Pön-dām, Pön-tzum-dju, Pön-tzum-tang-rem-dju, Don-dong-tang-nyik-dju. Another story records that two chief mountains were created, *viz.*, the Kang-chen and the Kang-lo. Another Mun makes a contrary statement, "The snow-capped mountain Kang-chen-rum was created first and as a companion to it, Nyo-ling-rum, the goddess of the great ocean was created." In some versions of this story the goddess is named Lyang-serdong-bong, who is a mountain goddess in the plain. There exist many other variations about the sequence of creation. 773 776

Then Rum made the two rivers, Rong-nyo and Rong-nyit, to flow down from the mountains. They are male and female. In the middle of the female Rong-nyo, he created the rock, Lyang-nyit-long-bong, similar to the navel in the human body. A high mountain, regarded as the navel of the world is a well-known conception in Asia. The goddess, Lyang-nyit-long-bong, is supposed to live on this rock and childless parents pray to her to be blessed with children. The idea of male gods having their abode on the snow-capped mountains and the goddesses in the lakes, is fairly common among the Lepcha. These gods and goddesses are often linked with the first parents in Lepcha mythology.[25]

The sacrificial prayers of the Mun and the Bong thing are often preceded by a legend of creation. The text which we shall later render in detail begins thus :

"Fa dong dju fa dong dō gom shi gom yu rum ! 773
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō (personal male and female deities) and Gom shi, Gom yu rum (hunting gods). 776 539
Lyang it ung it lyang sog dōm it
The earth was created, the water was created and the whole world was created.
Chi log so log it
Millet beer and husked rice were created
Lyang tōg bu ta she it ga.
Lyang wife, and Tōg bu ta she's son (man) were created"[26]

Another part reads as follows :

"Ayan na ba lyang ung ma it ma den na ba.
In very ancient times when land and water were not yet created."

An old report has the words :

"Ta she nun rum ayit ......Ta she created the good spirits
Num shim nyo ayit ....He created man.
Lyang ayit ....He created the earth.
Ung ayit ....He created water
Gun pang ayit ....He created all things."[27]

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25. Report of Gu-gu Bong thing at Git biyong.
26. Text of Gu-gu Bong thing.
27. Dictionary of the Lepcha language, op. cit., p. 121 b.

773 Another myth of creation reads as follows: "In the
beginning, the world was all water, and there were no living
[776] creatures. Then the Creator made an earthenware pot that
floated on the water, and this was land that floated on the sea.
Like a human body that is made of flesh and bones the earth
is made of rock and soil.

In the lowlands the Creator planted the bamboo, the sisin-nambong. After that, he made the Lang-chuk Lang-dal, that are now known as the Himalaya mountains, and he created the pa-song pumun bamboo which grows at the foot of these hills. And then he created Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu who were the first male and female, and it is from these two that human beings were spread over the entire world. Then there was neither birth nor death; but this was created later to suit the world.

The seeds of all the crops were given by Pudung-thing
and Nazong-gnyu to all their children who cultivated the
[177] land and lived on the produce."[28] If the elements are connected
with creation it is surely due to Tibetan and Hindu influence.
[772] In the lowest region is the wind, and above it are fire, water
and earth.[29] However, only two elements are mentioned: Ti-
gung-thik, the first man who is supposed to be identical with fire,
and Ni-gung-ngal, the first woman, who is identical with water.[30]

Apart from the earth the heavens were also decked out
with the sun, moon, stars and clouds created by Rum.[31] It is
also narrated that in the beginning there were two suns in
the sky. One of these shone by day and the other by night.
As it never grew dark, the earth suffered from incessant heat,
and so one of the suns was shot down. Seven or more moons
were supposed to have existed.[32] These, too, are mythological
[177] themes which the Lepchas have in common with the Indo-
Chinese peoples. Myths about creation are very numerous
among these tribes.[33]

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[28] C. B. Stocks, Folklore and Customs of the Lepchas of Sikkim, Journal and Proceedings, Asiatic Society of Bengal, N. S. Vol. XXI, 125/127. N. 4. p. 368.

[29] C. B. Stocks, op. cit., p. 345.

[30] Story as told by a Bong thing from Git biyong.

[31] cfr. op. cit. p. 439.

[32] op. cit. p. 336, Note 1, p. 363 sq.

[33] cfr. G. Gorer, Himalayan Village, An account of the Lepchas of Sikkim, London 1938, p. 223 sq.; cfr. The Song of Creation in Waddell, Among the Himalayas, London, 1900, p. 294 sq.

(b) Myths of the Creation of Man

There are several myths current about the creation of 773 man. Pum-thing created the first human beings. The first man was called Ti-gung-thik and his wife was called Ni-gung-ngal. They lived in Mayal-lyang, which lies on the other side of King-tzum-song-bu. There was then no disease, no suffering, no death. Now all human beings return to this [775] place after their death.

In days of yore it was possible to reach this land from the earth. A hunter once came into the district of Mayal. When night overtook him, he prepared to put up for the night. Then he became aware of lights gleaming a little distance away. He approached the place, contacted the people and asked for shelter. They said to him, "What are you doing over here in Ren-dyong?"[34] He replied, "I hunt animals so I can provide myself with food." "Have you then nothing else to eat? Have you no grain to sustain yourself?" "No, I have none," replied the hunter. So they gave him gherkins, rice and millet and gave him instructions about the cultivation of these seeds after the re-migration of the birds after winter. Later on another hunter travelled to the spot and was stranded. He lit a fire and began to prepare his food. The inhabitants came there and were desirous of looking on at the proceedings. The hunter, however, looked upon them as intruders. He grew furious and struck them with a view of driving them away. They said to him, "In our land no one strikes another. We all live in peace and harmony. Take up your belongings and leave the place as quickly as you can, or our dogs will pounce upon you." The hunter looked around and perceived dogs that resembled bears and tigers. He grew terrified and fled away as fast as he could. Great storms followed in his wake; there were landslides and earthquakes; mountains came crashing down and all the entrances to the land were completely sealed over. Ever since this incident Mayal has remained inaccessible.[35]

Gorer gives the following description of Mayal, "The people 775 of Mayal consists of seven brothers each with their own name

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[34] Dwelling place of the ancestors and now pronounced "den-dyong."

[35] Report from Kalimpong.

775 and each patron of some sort of grain. These seven brothers
are progenitors and ancestors and guardians of the Lepchas.
They were created by Itpomu who placed rice and millet
and maize in their charge when she made these crops. The
people of Mayal live in seven huts; they are immortal;
each morning they are infants,—at midday they are grown
men, and in the evening they are old. They all have huge
[164-787] goitres and it is from them that people know that big goitres
are a sign of prosperity and a large harvest. They wear the
traditional Lepcha costume of clothes made of nettle cloth
and small basket-work hats. They are between gods and
ordinary human beings; they are not gods because they live
on earth; but they are not human because they do not die.
The land of Mayal is far up the Tulung valley somewhere
behind the Kinchenjunga; at some time in the past the road
thither was open, but now it has been closed and is as unpassable as the cutting edge of a knife.

[776] On the road to Mayal are three guardian spirits called
Sog-po, who are brothers; the eldest is called Mayel-Yook-Rum,
he is also called Pong-rum when the hunters offer
sacrifice to him; his younger brothers, Mi-tik and Tom-tik,
are cruel deities who kill and eat men and animals. Tom-tik
is like a bear. They are the special guardians of the ibex
[825] and the musk deer which come from Mayal, which is the
reason why these animals are so difficult to kill. In the
country of Mayal crops grow a hundred times as big as here,
and it is from this country that the seeds of our present crops
originate. These crops are always ripe for harvesting. The
migratory birds are called 'Mayel fo', birds of Mayal, and
[825] they are sent out by the people of Mayal to the Lepchas to
indicate the seasons and the times when various agricultural
acts should be performed. When the time comes for the
[825] migrating birds to return to Mayal, the parent birds die on
the way and only the newly hatched ones survive the arduous
journey to Mayal from whence they are sent the next year to
act as indicators for the Lepchas. The people of Mayal have
no wives living with them but the two oldest of the people
Adoo-Yook and Alau-Yook, have in a way, as wives the two
[776-772] sisters Talyeu-Nimu and Sanguo-Nimu, who are the spirits
of the earth: these two women lie on their backs on the earth

and on their bellies are the cultivable lands. Into this Adoo- 775
Yook and Alan-Yook send rice and millet and maize, just as [776
if it were human seed from a husband and the women are 777]
fertilised and fruitful.

In the old days the path to Mayal was opened and sometimes the people of Mayal came to other parts of the world ; and occasionally adventurous hunters found their way into the Mayal country."[36] According to other stories not only the seven brothers but all the ancestors of the Lepchas live in Mayal.

Another Lepcha named Ti-gung-a-thik and Ni-gung-a- 773
ngal as the original ancestor. They lived a happy life and could hunt and roam wherever they liked. Food was available everywhere. Suffering and death were unknown to them. Their land was called Nemayal. Two Lepcha hunters once came to the land. The inhabitants gave them the seeds of gherkins, millets, rice and maize. The hunters however, forgot to ask them when the seeds were to be sown. So they went back again and asked them for the necessary instructions. The people of Mayal said, "When the ducks come back from Tibet, then you must sow the seed." That is February or March. Still they did not know a suitable season for planting the other seeds. They had, therefore, to spend a great deal of time making experiments until they found the most suitable times for sowing the seeds. Among these seeds was rice, which was supposed to be used only for sacrificial purposes. They chewed the husks of rice to see if the seed was ripe, and, finding it sweet, they began to consume it as food for themselves.[37]

The Dān-si Bong-thing from the Song-bur-mu tribe, who lives in Kafār-Basti, gave us the following information : The Lepchas come from Song-bur-tchu on the left of the Kang-
chen-mdzod-lnga. In the beginning there existed only the 773
god Rum. No demons existed at the time. The god had 776
no special name. He then created a pair of deities, Agek-rum and Alat-rum, who are the protecting spirits of procreation. Ta-she-thing and Tōg-bu-thing then came into being. But

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[36] op. cit. p. 235 sq.

[37] Report from Sam-sing near Maria-Basti.

773 the real god of creation is It-bo. He has a wife by name of
[776] De-bo. (It-bo and De-bo mean "to produce" and "to
create.") It-bo first created a man Ti-gung-thik. He then
took a bone from the body of this man and out of it he created
a wife for him. The place where the first human beings lived
was called Da-lon-par-tan. (This is also the plain in which
the tower intended to reach heaven was constructed.) The
first couple lived there in perfect happiness and contentment
until they became sinful. When they fell into sin the god
Rum punished them by sending great floods which continued
unabated for fifteen days so that all the people were drowned.
Only one Lepcha couple were able to save themselves in a
wooden ship.

Stocks narrates the following myth of creation : "In the
beginning there was only sea, and the creator Tashey-takbo-
[772] thing made two kinds of fish,—ngo, was the common kind,
while the ngo-yang had a serpent form. From the sea we
believe that a tortoise supports the world, and on it Tashey-
takbo-thing created birds and animals.

Then he tried to make a form of man from butter, but it would not stand up, as whenever he made it, it melted. (Had the butter only remained firm, we should all have been very beautiful). Then he made a human form of earth and mud, and wind came into this resemblance of man and life was created. Then Tashey-takbo-thing made blood out of the water which he put in it and the bones he created from stone. Then he moved away to see whether the creature he had made could answer him and speak, but as he had no nerves or veins he was unable to do so. So Tashey-takbo-thing picked a great many creepers from the jungle and from those which he spread all over the form, it spoke.

Thus was the first male created, but as there was no female he was lonely, and could not reproduce himself. One day as he was catching birds with his snare in the jungle, Tashey-takbo-thing entangled a woman in one for him to catch. So the man caught her and brought her to his home ; but at first they could not marry as there was no go between to help them to talk over the matter. But at last the Rum decided to send the owl (tam-bum) down the country of creation, It-lyang."[38] This myth is interesting because it relates, in the first place, the two efforts made by God to create man, and secondly because it relates how God brought the woman into the life of the man, by placing her in some mysterious way in the snare set by man to catch birds. 773

According to another myth the genealogy of mankind is even more complicated. Among the various creatures that were created as It-mo's children, there is also Takbo-thing, who hitherto had been designated as the god of creation. Ta-she is added to the name with whom we shall become more closely acquainted later on. "The last two to be born were Takbo-thing and Nazong-ngyu, and although these were brother and sister, they became husband and wife and had many children."[39] These children however were evil spirits and demons. They were not nourished by their mother, but were disowned and driven away. They live not on the earth but outside the earth. The reason why monsters were born out of this wedlock was surely due to the forbidden and irregular marriage between brother and sister. Rum then separated them. After the separation a human being was born. The mother loved this child deeply and fed it at her breast. When the other children perceived this they grew very jealous, hated the child intensely and so it died. The grief-stricken mother sent two birds up to Takbo-thing in order to fetch from him the Water of Life and the Water of Death. Tak-bo-thing gave them both the waters and instructed them about the use of the waters. On their return flight the birds decided not to use the directions as they had been given to them but to reverse them. And so it happens that men die and are always born again. Rum stands as a symbol to man. The Mung demons, on the contrary, do not die, and a priest-magician, Bong-thing, was sent to keep them under control. Only then was it possible for man to live on the earth. He is called Tar-bong-mu. As he was catching birds one day he found a fairy, the daughter of the Lha-ma-yin.[40] He forcibly took this beautiful Narib-nom as his wife. To avoid the misfortune consequent 773 776 [585]

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[38] op. cit. p. 255 sq.
[39] op. cit. p. 248.
[40] Tibetan name for Titans.

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776 to an irregular marriage, Rum decided that the marriage
[585] ceremonies should be observed. Milletbeer and ferment
[373] play an important part in these ceremonies. After the institution of the marriage ceremonies in this manner, the first men could contract a permitted marriage between brother and sister and their children are human beings.

The same story of procuring a ferment for Chi is told by Bong-thing Gu-gu in Git-biyong. Also another myth which we have discovered throws light on the relationship between men and demons: Ti-gung-thik and Ni-gung-ngal had a son. The demon, Susu-mung, also had a son. Both of these children were on the point of dying; and while they were breathing their last, two birds were sent to fetch the Water of Life and the Water of Death as medicine. The birds obtained both, but exchanged the medicines on their return flight. They gave the human child the Water of Death and it died. The child of the demon received the Water of Life and escaped death. Thus it is that demons still continued to plague men. Men made an effort to annihilate the demon, and when it had climbed a high tree one day they pulled the tree down and knocked the demon to pieces. Nevertheless, as the demon had tasted the Water of Immortality, the fragments of his body were transformed into flies, mosquitoes and other dangerous insects which continue to plague mankind.[41]

An old Lepcha, Sam-sing, from Maria-Basti told me this story: All men have descended from common parents. The first parents had three sons. The first was called Lapche and was the father of the Lepcha tribe. The second is the father of the Rai, and the third the father of the Meche. In the course of their wanderings the brothers came across a banana palm. The eldest brother stuck his knife into it with the intention of cutting it down. White water flowed out of the wound. "If that is the case, we shall not stay any longer with you," said the two brothers and they left him and went their way. The two then came across a Gommim leaf. The second brother cut the leaf and the cut turned black. Thereupon the youngest brother said to him, "If that is the case I will no longer stay with you." Henceforth 773 he wandered alone until he came to a plain where he made 776 his abode.[42]

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[41] cfr. a similar myth of Stocks, op. cit., p. 284.

According to another legend, man springs from a pair of deities or from deified ancestors. The above-mentioned Tak-bo-thing and Nasong-ngyu belong to the category of these deified ancestors. The old woman, Han-bu-ni, who is Mun and Andshemu told me this, "Sa-dzug-rum is the god of heaven and the sun. His wife is Gor-song-mu, that is the mother of Gor-song, because she has a son by that name. She also has a daughter. Sa-dzug-rum is like a father and mother of mankind. I offer sacrifices to him three times each [782 year after the rice, corn and millet harvests. The animal 241] most suitable for the sacrifice is the pig. The next best is the bullock or cow, and the goat ranks last. The pig is killed by piercing its heart from under the shoulder-blade. The cattle are killed by a blow with an axe on the back of the neck. The goats have their throats cut.

Another pair of deities are Kang-chen-rum, who lives in 776 Himal, and his wife, Nyo-lig-rum, who lives in the sea. They have two children ; the son, Dju-kōb, and the daughter, Bi-kōb. But the highest of all these gods is Sa-dzug-rum."

Thus this old Mun and Andshemu regards Sa-dzug-rum as their Supreme God, and believes that he has a wife. She however disagrees about calling Gor-song the first man. She also denies that Dju-kōb and Bi-kōb were the ancestral parents of the tribe. However she was unable to give us the names of the first men.

Sa-liang, the son and pupil of the famous Bong-thing Ong-di, contradicted her and related the following, "The Supreme God is Sa-dzug-rum. He has no wife, but four assistants. These are the four spirits who bring discord and pain into the world. They have therefore to be appeased by sacrifices [782] performed twice a year. Sa-dzug-rum is not the god of creation. Rather, it is Rum who is the god of creation. He it was who created the first human beings, Ti-gung and Ni- [773] gung. For a while they were serenely happy and were free from anxiety and suffering. Later they sinned, and as a

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[42] cfr. a similar myth quoted above p. 7.

776 consequence they had to labour in order to procure their [773] livelihood. These first human beings are the parents of the Rong (Lepcha), the Brug-pa (Bhutanese) and the Jimdar (Nepalese). The very first man, the progenitor of the race, is Ti-gung-pum." So far the statement of Sa-liang. And so we have different traditions that tell the story of the first human beings. Often entire genealogies of gods and spirits are quoted.[43] Finally, the immediate ancestors of mankind make their appearance. The presence of evil in the world is sometimes attributed to them, for, being brother and sister, they live as man and wife, without the proper performance of the marriage ceremonies. Other myths offer other solutions for the problem of evil in the world.

(*c*) Myths of the Deluge

773 "In the beginning all men were good. Gradually they grew perverse. This annoyed Rum to such an extent that he sent a great deluge to destroy them all. Only one high mountain peak remained above the water. This was originally called Dŏng-grung, a ladder which links earth with heaven. The mountain is now called Dān-dong. In order to appease god and make the flood abate, the people sacrificed chi, millet beer, through the bird 'ko-hon,' (partridge). As the bird sprayed the chi in sacrifice to heaven some of it fell on its breast. This fact is supposed to explain why even today, the bird's breast is bitter to the taste. The sacrifice was pleasing to god and the flood abated."

We have still another version of this tradition, "Rong-nyo, the female river, and Rong-nyit, the male, were deliberating with each other as to how they could meet and unite on the plain at the outskirts of the jungle. In the Lepcha language this place is called Pa-sog. Rong-nyo chose as her guide through the mountains a snake which glided straight to their destination. Rong-nyit chose the partridge as his guide. The bird flew hither and thither and took a confusing route across the mountain, thus causing Rong-nyit to arrive late at the rendezvous. He was very angry when he discovered that Rong-nyo had already arrived. Furiously he shouted, 'I am going back!' As he flowed backward the waters rose higher and higher and soon covered the mountains. All mankind was drowned. Only one couple were able to save themselves on the high peak, Dān-dong. When this happened Rong-nyo said to the priest, 'Offer a sacrifice to Rong-nyit. Appease him so that he may turn back and the floods subside.' The priest did as he was told, and when the sacrifice had been offered the floods abated. Then Rong-nyo said, 'I am a woman. I shall, therefore, be obedient and live at a lower level than man, who shall henceforth flow over me.' And so when the two rivers did eventually meet, Rong-nyit streamed over Rong-nyo, who flows beneath it."[44]

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[43] cfr. Stocks, op. cit. 345 sq.

This myth makes it abundantly clear that the quarrel between the man and the woman was the real cause of the flood. Instead of the bird acting as the intermediary, the priest performs the conciliatory sacrifice. Another version of this myth identifies the partridge with the woman, "In the beginning Fooroong and Nazong-nyo lived, our first grandfather and mother, the ancestors on the earth. The flood came on and nearly every human creature perished, only two who ran to the summit of Mount Tendong-lho were saved. Now Takbo-thing was the father of Tashey-thing, who had married the partridge (ko-hon-fo) and she put some chi in a large leaf (tung-fyum-nyom) which she offered to her father-in-law saying that if he only would, he could stop the flood. And Takbo-thing looking down from the country of the Rum, saw that the world was flooded, and that his daughter-in-law was praying to him, and offering him 'chi.' He took up his walking stick (pa tung) and struck the world so that the water sank in. But the partridge split some of the 'chi' on her breast. (The mark can be seen to this day, and because of this the partridge is called tung-fyum). So the world became dry once more, and the trees and the bushes commenced to grow once again and the world was re-peopled."[45] In this myth the relationship between Tashey-thing and Takbo-thing is again altered. This is another instance of the manifold variations prevalent among Lepcha legends.

[44] Kalimpong tradition.
[45] Stocks, op. cit. p. 380 ; cfr. the genealogy of God and his family p. 60.

773 [776] In another legend the serpent king is connected with the flood : "....And then he created Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu who were the first male and female and it is from these two that the human beings have spread over the entire world..... When these two were made, birth so multiplied that there was not enough room in the world. Then Parli-bu, who was the serpent-king, dammed the rivers by lying in them, and they overflowed and rose to a great height and reached the sky. Everyone fled to the top of Kong-chen-chu, the highest peak in the Himalayas, but only two people were saved. The place where they stood is called Mayak-kyong to this day. While the flood was raging, Tashey-thing sent a hero down into the world named Yongli-pono, to kill the serpent who was blocking the rivers. The hero cut the serpent to pieces thus making the waters run down into the plains and we, the Rong folk, still believe that the Blue Mountains (that can be seen from the valley of Rangpo-chu) are the remains of the cut body of the serpent. When the world was dry once again, Tashey-thing sent down two rivers from the Himalaya mountains guided by another serpent called king Paril-patong and a quail, the Ko-hun-fo, and these were Rung-nyo (Tista) and Rung-nyit.

He also sent Pudung-thing and Nazong-gnyu down into the world from the height of Mayal-kyong, giving them the name Tikung-tek and Nikong-gnal. These are the first 'grandfather' and 'grandmother' of the Rong folk. As they had no king, Tashey-thing sent down Gyabo-chaya-dor-tulku from Mayal-kyong and he is the 'grandfather' (ancestor) of the present Maharaja."[46] This legend links the first parents with the flood and the re-peopling of the earth. The name of the first king who is sent by the High God is quite Tibetan and points to Tibetan motifs, according to which, the first king came from heaven.

Mainwaring, the great collector of cultural treasures of the Lepchas, cites the following myth, "It may be noted that the Lepchas have legends in common with divers other primitive races,....regarding the flood and the tower of Babel. The legends were without doubt, brought with them

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46. op. cit. 358 sq.

from beyond the snows, but they haye connected the incidents with their present place of residence. There is a hill visible from Darjeeling, which, as the tale hath it, when all the country was under water, arose and supported a ship containing a few persons, all other people being drowned. The hill rose up like a horn, (hence the name a-róng, a horn,) and afterwards subsided to its present form. It is known to the Europeans as the Camel's back. On the top cf the lofty Sung-lilho, it is said, a foolish class of Lepchas—(the na-óng) now extinct,—endeavoured to raise a building high enough to reach the heavens. Rock and blocks of stone, as the ruins, are shown on the place."[47] We ourselves heard this saga of the tower and its ruins, in Darjeeling. In Git-biyong, we heard the following version of this saga, "The Lepchas filled a great many pitchers with earth, and piled them higher and higher over each other in an effort to reach the heavens. The man on the top reached so high that with the aid of a long hook he fancied he could link earth with heaven. Whereupon he shouted to the people beneath him, 'Quick! Pass a hook on to me.' It must be noted that in the Lepcha language the word for 'hook' and for 'cut off' have an identical pronunciation. The people yelled, 'Why cut off?' From above sounded the urgent answer, 'Quick, the hook.' They understood it to be, 'Quick, cut off!' So they cut off the rope and their tower came crumbling to the ground."

Here is another version of the story, "When (after the flood) the world was full of people once more, a tribe called the Na-ong, or 'Ignorant persons' prepared to ascend to the Rum country, and they began to build a tower of earthen pots. They piled them so high that the Rum country was only one pole away. The creator thought they were becoming too eager and too zealous, and that it was not good for them.

So he thought he would create confusion, and make them all speak in different tongues, so that they would misunderstand one another. The man at the top shouted, 'Kok vim yang tale' (hand up the pole with the hook,) while the men at the bottom heard the words, 'Chek tala' (cut it

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[47] G. B. Mainwaring, A grammar of the Róng (Lepcha) Language, Calcutta, 1876, p. XX.

773 173 down). They wondering greatly shouted up to ask the man at the top whether he really meant it. This time they heard the words 'ak, ak' (yes, yes). And they at once cut the tower down, which falling, killed many of the Na-ong, and those that remained had to separate on account of their not being able to understand one another. And even today broken earthern pots are to be found on that plain which is called Dalon-partan."[48] And so we see that the Lepchas also possess myths pertaining to the flood, to the building of the tower and the babel of tongues in common with so many other South Asian peoples, *e.g.* the Miau, the Lolo, the Thai, the Mikmir and many others.

(*d*) THE LAND OF THE GODS AND SPIRITS

772 776 The myth describing the building of the tower demonstrates the effort made by the Lepchas to reach Rum-lyang, the land of the gods. The Lepchas are of the opinion that this land lies in the region of the heavens. From this land Rum is supposed to look down to earth. From there too, gods and spirits come down to the land of men, or they send messengers and strange powers in the form of thunderbolts to bring about strange births on earth.[49] On the other hand heroes, and the steeds on which they ride may occasionally fly up to heaven before actual dying. These are the same mythical motifs that are common among the Tibetans.[50]

The ancestral spirits, who, as we saw above, are in Mayal, are sometimes said to be in Rum-lyang. We shall probe into this question more deeply, when we treat about the cult of death.

According to other Lepchas, the land of the gods does not lie above, in the region of the heavens but below. Consequently they call this region "Dhing-song-rum." "Dhing-song" means below. The Kalimpong native on whose authority we have sometimes relied, indulges in the following line of reasoning, "The seed must fall down into the earth before it can spring forth and bear fruit. When it has ripened

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[48] Stocks, op. cit. p. 359 sq.
[49] Stocks, op. cit. p. 336 sq.
[50] op. cit. p. 337.

it falls down to the earth once again. This is the line of 772
action from lower to the higher. And so it must be that the 776
land of the gods must be below." In this as in other matters
we find that there is a varied line of reasoning among the
Lepchas.

(c) THE LAND OF SOULS

Some Lepchas believe that the souls of the departed 775
go to the country of the ancestors, Ren djong or Mayal. [774]
Others say on the contrary that the soul goes to Rum-lyang.
It was there before birth ; thither it returns again after death
to be born again as a little child in the land of souls. Immediately after death, the soul goes to an intermediate place
Sön-lyang, originally called Söm-lon, the leader of souls.
The Bong-thing summons it back thence and asks it, at the
death ceremony how it died, whether it was through illness
or through the magic of wicked men. The soul then comes
to the ear of the Bong-thing and gives him this important information. He makes the necessary provisions for the individual
soul on the basis of this information. The Mun or Bong-thing then leads the soul to the Rum-lyang and locks it up
securely so that it cannot return to its pristine home or relations
or cause them any manner of harm. The entire ceremony [764]
is performed in the Sang-lion rite. A year after death the
Bong-thing goes in a trance to Rum-lyang, opens up the place
where the soul had been locked. There he finds a little child.
He dresses it up in a child's clothes and releases it to live and
grow up among the other ancestors.[51]

According to others there is an intermediate place called [772]
Tiamtan, or Sari-rung-dong-chen or Siri-nong-dong-chen.[52]
Another place is called Nyo-lyang, the abode of the wicked.
There are divergent views about the land of souls, just as [184]
there are about the land of gods. An old Mun woman of
Git-biyong gave us this pertinent item of information, "We
bring the souls of the dead very high up in to the heavens and
very near the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing. He it is who has [776]
created us, the animals and everything else."

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[51] cfr. G. Gorer, Himalayan Village, London 1938, p. 353 sq.
[52] cfr. Stocks, op. cit. p. 337.

(f) THE CONCEPT OF GOD

776 The Lepchas express the idea of God by the word "Rum." By this term they understand gods and spirits which are favourable to men and who offer them protection. In contrast to the word Rum, they have the word "Mung" to indicate the goblins and the demons who are harmful to man. The Rong possess a few genealogies of gods with which we shall later become acquainted. The name "Rum" standing all by itself expresses the idea of the Supreme God; but words expressing the special attributes of the Supreme God are often joined to the word "Rum." To cite a few instances: Pum means "first cause," "the essential," "the absolute," "the first beginning," and so we have the words: Pum-rum, Pum-thing or Pum-thing-rum, which are popular names for the Chief God. Then again "ayit (it)," "(ay)it-de," "de-bo," or "(ay) it-bo" mean "to create," "to produce," and we have the words It-rum, De-rum, It-bo and Pum-bo, all of which express the idea of God as the creator. Some of the Lepchas say that the Supreme God is not the creator, but that he delegated the function of creation to some other spirits. In the concept of God that is current among the Rong, we can observe that the original functions of the Supreme God have been attributed to spirits who are looked upon by them as the adjutants and the supporters of the Supreme God. This is how the divine genealogies originate and lead up to a kind of demiurge and other forms.

Some of the Mun and the Bong-thing call the Supreme God, Sa-dzug-rum. Sa-dzug is the sun. Sa-dzug-rum means "sun god" as well as "God of the heavens." "Ta-she-thing" is a very common name for the Supreme Being. Su-li-man, a Lepcha from the Bam-ling tribe, who lives in Se-ryo-cha, gave us this description of the Supreme God. "Ta-she-thing is the Supreme God. He is everywhere. Anyone who understands the rites may offer him a sacrifice." Ta-she-thing is the name given also to Padmasambhava who is the founder of Lamaism in Tibet. Occasionally one meets with the rather long drawn out name "Ta-she-tak-bo-thing." "Tak-bo-thing" or "Tok-bo-thing" is regarded by some as the son of Ta-she-thing. The majority of the Lepchas are of the

opinion that Rum has no wife. But other names used for 776
the Supreme God are expressive of the belief that he had a wife. Han-bu-ni Mun said, "Sa-dzug-rum has a wife by the name of Gor-song-mu." Sa-liang, son of the Bong-thing Ong-di, contradicts this statement, "Sa-dzug-rum has no wife, but he has four help-mates. These are the four spirits who cause disquite and unrest in the world. They have [776
to be appeased by sacrifices which we perform twice a year. 782]
Sa-dzug-rum is not the god of creation, which took place through another god."

Stocks writes, "It appears that there were five original deities: It-mo and her husband Pa-sandi, their children, Nazong-gnyu and Takbo-thing and Tashe-thing, the son of the former. In these creative power is attributed to the female deities, It-mo and Nazong-gnyu (note 1). The latter (Pasandi) is only mentioned once, and as apparently there is much confusion between the functions of him and of his son, Takbo-thing, it would be difficult to establish his real nature."[53] The same confusion exists between Ta-she-thing and Tak-bo-thing. We may note however that a female deity, contrary to the belief of Gorer, is never regarded as a Supreme Being. Gorer considers It-bo-mo to be female,[54] but we have seen that It-bo or Ayit-bo means the god of creation. The Dān-si Bong-thing from Ka-får says, "In the beginning there was only the God, RUM. He had no special name. The demons Mung were non-existent at the time. Then came the first pair of deities, Agek-rum and Alat-rum, the god and goddess of procreation. Then too, there existed Ta-she-thing and Tak-bo-thing. There was besides, It-bo and his wife De-bo. It-bo was the god of creation who created the first man, Ti-gung-tik." We did not come across the concept of a goddess as the Highest Being in all the Lepcha mythology, but we found certain very definite evidences of the belief that the Supreme God has a wife (cfr. genealogy of God p. 60).

Another important god is Pum-rum, the god of the hunters. 776
He is also called, among other names, Dju-thing or Pong-rum. 224
Dju-thing is honoured as a threefold being. In the highest

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[53] op. cit. p. 237.
[54] op. cit. p. 236.

776 mountain regions he is called Mo-nom-dju, for it is he who leads
224 the chamois and the wild sheep, Mo-nom, to the hunters.
In the lower hills he is called Se-go-bu-log-dju and delivers
up stag, bears and other game. In the lower plains he is
called Se-wing-dju, or the one who helps capture the game
of the plains. Gom-shi and Gom-yu-rum are hunting gods
and it is they who instil in the hunters the passion for hunting.
The god of the hunters is worshipped exclusively by the men
and the women do not in any way participate in the worship.
We shall consider the details of this sacrifice at a later stage.
[773 The Rong claim that "Rum-zong-pa-no gave them bows,
226] arrows and knives and taught them how to shoot fish."

The wife of Rum-zong-pa-no is Na-li-pun-di who
776 instructed the women in the arts of farming, weaving and taught
[773] them housework and the use of the sickle. Sa-dju is another
god venerated as god of agriculture. If a housewife who
[781] is possessed by Sa-dju dies, the spirit continues to possess one
of her daughters even though the daughter may have in the
meanwhile left the family through marriage. This deity
appears to the women in dreams in the guise of an old man.
[787] If the apparition has a large goitre it augurs well for a rich
harvest. If on the other hand it has no goitre at all it omens
a bad harvest.

782 We already know from myths related earlier, that the
776 Lepchas were given the first seeds by higher beings. These
seeds were gaguni, which has the appearance of a millet-like
maize; sama, a kind of white millet; goya, dry rice, and
mokai, red maize. The dog plays an important role in the
obtaining of rice and hence the Rong give, each time, some
[231] portion of the rice they eat to the dog. We have noticed how,
after a meal of rice, the remnants are scattered on the floor,
and the dogs, which otherwise are not allowed inside the house,
came in and ate the rice. The sacrifice to the god of agriculture
is usually offered by the housewife. Nevertheless the man
can offer the sacrifice if for some grave reason the woman is
unable to do so. Man is not altogether excluded from the
performance of the sacrifice, as is the case with the women in
the sacrifice to the god of the hunters.

776 The family or household god is Rum-fat, who is the
protector of domestic animals. The two gods of procreation,

Ayek-rum and Alat-rum, have an important part in their 776
worship. The spirits that protect individual persons are also
of importance. This is particularly true of Hit-rum who is
the protecting spirit of the Bong-thing. When a Bong-thing
dies his soul, like a shadow, goes to Hit-rum. The Dān-si
Bong-thing from Ka-fār has the following nine protecting
spirits : Sur-mu-mu-rum, Bong-thing-rum, Dang-mu-rum,
Niu-leg-rum, Mōn-lam-rum, Tok-tzōm-rum, Darmit-rum,
Nam-jin-rum. These he must honour in a very special
manner. Thus we see that the Rong believe in the existence
of many gods and spirits and take pains in arranging them
in the order of male and female couples.

In contrast with these benign gods are the innumerable
hordes of demons and goblins who cause harm to men and
animals, fields and forests. There are tracks in the mountains
which are considered to be the footsteps of the gigantic
monster, Mi-gat-mung. Ma-ra-mung is a very evil demon,
who flies up into the sky and reveals himself there in the form [821]
of comets, northern lights and other astral phenomena.
Each one of the human illnesses is caused by a demon :
Ru-mung, consumption ; Dom-mung, leprosy ; etc., and these [753]
constitute the great flock of disease-demons. Goblins and
witches lurk in the mountains, woods, gorges and deserts.
It is necessary to obtain safeguards and measures of protection
against all demons and evil spirits, and these are vouchsafed
by the Supreme Being through his priests, the Mun and the
Bong-thing.

(g) THE MUN AND THE BONG-THING

Stocks quotes an illuminating legend concerning the 773
origin of the Bong-thing. Through the interchanging of the 776
Waters of Life and Death the Mung demons had acquired 793
immortality. It became incumbent on God to set right the
order of things. "Everything was nearly completed, but a
Bong-thing was required as a mediator to speak between the
Rum and the Humans" (Rum made many efforts that
failed). "...Then there was only one child of the Creator left,
and he didn't wish to leave home, but the Creator who loved
him like a mother, told him he ought to go and see his brothers

773 and sisters, the Himalaya Mountains, and the lakes and all
776 the rivers, in order that he might become a Bong-thing to
793 help the humans against the evil spirits.

And the child asked It-mo what would be the best things to carry with him on the journey, and the Creator gave him some ginger (salep), some garlic (paki-mun-gu) and a tree, the fruit of which he could place on a stick and burn slowly
[278] like a lamp (the safi-kun). And all these things are used externally and internally by the Bong-thing today, and from all these plants and bulbs medicine is made.

Taking all these bulbs the son came to the Lung-tun-parten tableland in the Himalayas but he found that the Mung had already come to that place; they had, indeed, spread over the whole country; they were in all the mountains and in all the trees and in all the caves. So he said to them, 'I was sent to go round the world, but you seem to be everywhere before me, so I will return to the Creator.'

[753 But when he turned and was leaving the Mung caught
782] hold of him saying, 'On one condition we will do everything you command;—when we worry the human beings with disease and illness we will go away and leave them in peace if, in return, you will give us some fowls, eggs, pigs or any other animals.' The Bong-thing said, 'You force me to do this. Only swear you will leave all human beings in peace. I will call my brothers Sakbri-bu and Sahnang-bu to act as witnesses.' To this they all agreed and at the Partam-Sakber, the Mung swore that when they worried human persons with illness they would leave the sick person in peace were the Bong-thing do attend to the patient, and propitiate them, the Mung, by giving them offerings of a cow, a pig or of several goats. To make doubly sure, the Bong-thing asked the Mung to swear by spitting on a rock there, which they did, and so great was the oath that it shattered the rock to pieces. And again he asked them to swear and spit in the lake which they did; but the oath was so great that it caused the lake to dry up. Yet once more he asked them to swear by spitting on a tree which they did; but the tree could not bear the weight of the oath and it fell. This was the covenant between the Bong-thing and the Mung and we, the Rong folk, believe this is the origin of the Bong-thing.....And when

773
he had done this, he went up to Tiamtan where he built a 776
palace and we, the Rong folk, believe he still lives there. It 773
is a country that lies midway between heaven (Rum-lyang) [772]
and earth."[58]

The prime characteristic of the Mun or the Bong-thing 773
is the heavenly calling to officiate as intermediaries between
god and man. The Ling-gu Lepcha from Maria-Basti
relates an interesting fact: "If, in a dream, a man sees a [787]
thread descend on himself from heaven, he has to interpret
it as a summons from heaven to be a Bong-thing or a Mun.
Those pre-elected in this manner must necessarily obey the summons and dedicate themselves to this office. It may happen that a man sees the thread descend on someone else. In this case he is not bound to reveal his dream to the person concerned, who will in any case obey the summons. If however anyone cuts the thread all of a sudden as the thread is descending on the elected one, death will unexpectedly overtake the one so elected."

The Dān-si Bong-thing from Ka-fār Basti gives us an 773
illuminating account of his experience in this regard. "Before 781
I became a Bong-thing," he narrates, "I became like one possessed, and was driven into the heart of the forest. I was utterly downcast and goaded on to a state of despair. As time elapsed, I got accustomed to this state and began to perceive the animals of the forest. The spirit then carried me to a dizzy and precipitous rocky projection where I spent the night. At midnight I was filled with superhuman strength, so much so that I uprooted a gigantic tree. The following morning the spirit brought me back. A man who had noticed me uprooting the tree reported the incident to my parents, who decided that I should become a Bong-thing."

At the age of about sixteen, the Gu-gu Bong-thing 773
suffered from a malingering illness which left him in a state
of perpetual exhaustion. As this state continued with an [787]
alarming uninterruptedness, his parents decided that he should become a Bong-thing. He agreed to this and became a disciple of the Bong-thing, A-thi.

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[58] op. cit. p. 360 sq.

793 The Han-bu-ni from Git-biyong gives us a rather detailed
report of her initiation. "My maternal grandmother was
a Mun. At the age of nine I fell ill and commenced speaking
[757 a variety of languages. The people said, 'It is the spirit of
775] her grandmother, the Mun let, who speaks through her.'
So my parents summoned a Bong-thing who performed the
sacrifice of initiation, offering a bullock, a pig and a goat.
Thereafter I was apprenticed to a female Mun for a period
of three years during which time I was taught the prayers,
the traditions and the ceremonies. After the completion of
my apprenticeship the sacrifice was renewed. I was given
full powers and began to sacrifice independently. Should
[782] I desire to conjure up my spirit, I offer chi, butter, and incense
in sacrifice and the spirit quickly responds to my summons
to appear. I notice at first a blurred object, like a cloud of
dust approaching me. My heart tells me that the spirit is
near."

This woman, who is over eighty years of age today,
and is Mun as well as Andshemu, has recently become a
[797] Christian. We asked her whether the old spirit did not harass
her for having given up her former priesthood and ceased
to honour it. "Not at all. The spirit does not torment me
in the least," she replied. Later she proudly said to the
Lepchas, "It is my privilege to instruct this great European
priest who comes from China and Tibet, in the teachings of
the Mun and the Bong-thing." She was very pleased to find
us interested in the old traditions. She knew a little Tibetan,
and loved to converse with us in that language.

796 A Rong woman, whose father and brother are both
Bong-thing, has narrated to us the following story, "In
[535] the evening my father drank chi. This made him excited
and he danced through the night. Very often three more
Bong-thing came to our house and they all danced together.
That is customary with the Mun and the Bong-thing. In
the neighbourhood there are three women and two men
who hold their dances by turns in each other's houses. This
dance festival must take place at least three times a year;
—in April at the barley harvest; in September at the first
[778 millet harvest, and finally in October at the second millet
782] harvest. Torma (Tibetan expression for sacrificial images)

of rice and butter are in the first instance brought forward. 796
These are offered with little roasted birds, fish, incense and [778
chi, and in addition a rupee in money. Prior to the actual 782]
offering, garlands of flowers are prepared and hung up in
the house. The flowers are called "Sa-gi." "Amiāl" means
garlands, and it is from these that the festival derives its name
"Sa-gi-sa-amiāl." The god of power is also called "Sa-gi." [776]
"Sa-gi-fat" means sacrifice and annual festival. After the
performance of the sacrifice the men and women begin to [535]
dance, and during the dance they sometimes fall to the ground
and twitch and tremble. They are then lifted up and continue [781]
with the dance. The onlookers keep watch to ensure that
none of the dancers escapes from the room. The spirit of
my father who is now dead has passed over to my brother,
Sa-hó."

Next comes the actual vocation. This always takes 793
place during an illness when the physical powers of the patient 753
are at a low ebb. We had the opportunity of observing the 787
case of a girl who was, however, not a Lepcha but a Kami.
The sequence of events is nonetheless identical. The child is
said to be possessed by a Limbu spirit and at such times she
speaks the Limbu language. The people, therefore, insist
that she must become a soothsayer. The girl gets epileptic
fits and froths at the mouth. The nerves are upset and distraught
and the people see in all this a case of possession by
the spirit. The girl still is with her parents and prays each [782]
day at definite times to the spirit and renders it homage. At
a later stage the girl is brought to a teacher ; not however to a [791]
Lepcha teacher, but to a Nepalese magician, since a Lepcha
will not teach a member of another tribe.

All those who receive this summons from the spirit must
necessarily answer the summons and go to a teacher who will
give them the required initiation, instruction, practices, and
teach them the prayers. A great sacrifice, mentioned by the 793
Han-bu-ni Mun above, has to be performed by way of initia- 796
tion. Gorer describes this ceremony as follows, "In the 782
house a little table is set up. On it to the right lies a scarf 778
of honour with a rupee. In the middle is a wooden vessel
which is filled with chi and garnished with butter round the
rim. On the right is a stone incense-burner filled with Tibetan

793 incense, and dry twigs from the cypress tree. In front of
796 the little table is a winnower on which parts of the animal
[782 sacrifices are arranged in the following manner: opposite
the vessel is the skull turned towards the table. Behind it
787] are the entrails. To the left of the skull is a hind leg, to the front is a foreleg. Between the foreleg and the entrails is a thigh with a little meat. When everything is arranged, the teacher sits behind the table a little to the left, in front of the scarf. His pupil sits on his right. Then he lays the scarf on the pupil's hand and recites the prayers, which the apprentice repeats after him sentence by sentence. Then the master makes a ceremonial speech to the initiated in which he explains: 'Now the price for the freeing of your body is paid to the demon, but under one condition, that you consecrate your life to the Mun-god, and that you offer up your body as his dwelling place.' After this speech he hands the vessel filled with the chi to his pupil so that he can drink from it three times from three different places. This drinking of the chi from the vessel garnished with butter stands for the actual ritual consecration. With this the pupil is bound for three years to study with his master. At the end of the instruction, a second sacrifice of a bullock is performed. With this the pupil is given full powers and can function independently.

782 The most important sacrificial offering for all these
796 ceremonies is the bullock. An ox is desirable. If a pig
is given the neophite will be unable to expel Lom-doon-moong
[753 (the devil of Jaundice). If a goat, he will be unable to expel
776] Mat-moong, (the devil who produces various unpleasant
symptoms which are the results of ancestral quarrels)."[58]

793 According to our investigations, the Mun and the Bong-thing are both equally powerful magicians. They only, can expel demons and appease the gods through sacrifice. Both, men as well as women, can be Mun. The Mun spirit is not a female spirit but can choose either men or women as its servants. The Bong-thing can only be a man. The Mun
[778 and the Bong-thing whom we were able to observe, do not
243 wear any special ceremonial dress or ornaments during their
534] activities, neither do they use the double skull-drum (damaru)

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[58] op. cit. p. 479.

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nor the big flat round Shaman-drum (rnga). For the 534
sacrifice they do not use either the magic dagger (phur-bu) 293
or the thunderbolt (rdo-rje), nor conch trumpets (dung), 778
nor flutes made from human thigh bones (rkang-gling),
nor the trident, nor the cup of the human skull (thod-pa).
All the above mentioned articles are however indispensable 793
to the Tibetan magicians, the Inner Asiatic and the Siberian 171
Shamans. It is therefore evident, that the Mun and the
Bong-thing cannot be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po as
some scholars state. They belong rather to that primitive
priest class, which has not been influenced by the typical
Shamanism which operated in Tibet and spread from there
to some Himalayan districts, to Inner and East Asia. The
Mun and the Bong-thing are not allowed to practise any
black magic as such. This is attributed to them by the neighbouring [754]
people, who consequently fear them greatly. During
our investigations on this subject we repeatedly heard it said,
"Only a wicked and demoralised Mun and Bong-thing would
use his powers to harm another person, for their vocation is
precisely to help people and to warn off all harm." The Mun [778
wears no prayer cord. When he has to make a prophecy, 787]
he calls to his spirit, who comes on to his shoulder and speaks
through his mouth. The Bong-thing has a prayer string,
which he uses when prophesying. This string however,
differs from the Tibetan one and has no definite number
of beads.

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In the white magic practised by the Lepchas we found 789
many parallels with the ancient Chinese white magic, which 171
had not as yet been influenced by the typical Inner Asiatic
Shamanism. There is something in common to both in the
matter of casting out demons. The magician compels the
demon to enter into a pot of blood. Once the demon is in,
he closes the pot and buries it.[87] Their dances have certain [535]
characteristics in common with the Wu,—the ancient Chinese
magicians. In everything we find, the content of the ancient
class of magic which was widely spread and which preceded
the Inner Asiatic Shamanism. There it received later the
typical shaping which today, under the name of Shamanism

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[87] cfr. Dictionary of the Lepcha Language, op. cit. p. 294 a.b.

793 789 171 wrongly includes all similar phenomena. The Mun and the Bong-thing bear the closest resemblance to the Barwas of the Bhils, the Pariar or Parihar of the Korkus (Central India), the Mantravadis of the Parayans and Pulayans (South India), and the Mantravadis of many other primitive tribes of India. We find here a very old class of magicians who have maintained their primitive tradition, and have well established rites and rules.

793 [776] Next in importance to the Mun and the Bong-thing, the male Pau and the female Andshemu or Nandshemu are to be found among the Lepchas. Both these are said to be Tibetan spirits and are not empowered to perform the great sacrifices. They need the equipment of the Tibetan Shaman :
[778] —thunderbolts, skull-drums, etc. Tibetan influence is clearly evinced in all details. It may be noted that a Mun can also be an Andshemu, *e.g.* Han-bu-ni whom we have mentioned on more than one occasion. When she came forth as an
[781] Andshemu she spoke Tibetan in the trance and employed the Tibetan articles in the performance of the ceremonies. A Bong-thing can at the same time be a Pau, and he uses the Tibetan articles when he presents himself as a Pau. Some investigators have failed to observe this difference, and have in consequence erroneously declared the Mun and the Bong-thing to be identical with the Tibetan Bon-po. Gorer failed to perceive this important distinction, and hence there occur in his work, statements which are contradictory to the observations we have made. He states, for example, that the Mun are only female. We have taken great pains to verify that there are both male and female Mun. He calls the Bong-thing "Padem," who was supposed to represent a Tibetan spirit.
[777] This, however, indicates the extent to which Tibetan influence has extended in the area, particularly as the district in which Gorer carried out his research lay further north, to the Tibetan frontier. Gorer considers the Bong-thing to be weaker than the Mun, which again is not true in the districts in which we carried out our research. He draws a distinction between two kinds of Mun ; the good Tang-li Mun, the white magician, and the bad Mun-mook Mun, the black magician. Gorer
[764] however admits that whether one belongs to one type or to the other, depends upon the teacher from whom the instruction

is received. If the teacher is a black magician, he teaches the 793 [754]
black arts. It therefore has nothing to do with the Mun
spirit who would be from the very beginning an evil being.
This entirely contradicts the ancient tradition of the Mun
and the Bong-thing who were established as mediators between
God and men and as the protectors of men against the machinations
of the demons. To this date the Mun and the Bong-thing
have preserved these old traditions.[58]

The spirits of the Mun and the Bong-thing do not always [776]
live in their mediums, but they stay in a place called Tiamtan,
as we learned above. They come down from there only
when they are summoned. They take complete possession
of their mediums only two or three times each year, particularly [796
at the time of the festivals of the great sacrifices. At 781]
other times the mediums do not fall into a total trance. As
we did not have the opportunity of observing such a trance
personally, we repeat the description as given by Gorer,
"When they come down, the vessel which receives them feels as
though bowed down by a heavy weight.

The Moon only takes possession of this vessel twice a 793
year, once in the hot season, and once in the wet season. 796
This is a big ceremony and elaborate sacrifices are made.
The day before the sacrifices I start feeling ill ; I feel heavy [152]
and pressed down and cannot bear any noise. I tremble
constantly and I am covered with sweat. I pray to the gods [782]
to let me off, and I offer the chi and incense in preparation
for them to wait for the true sacrifices. The next day the
ceremony is held inside a house and many people are present.
I sit down cross-legged in front of the offerings. Besides the
ordinary offerings there is a wreath of flowers and a flower
bedecked stick. When I sit opposite these I feel a heavy [781]
burden pressed over my shoulders and as if my flesh is being
poked with sticks—zinga-zinga-zinga-zinga ; suddenly a sort
of darkness comes over my eyes, it is as if I was in a sort of
dream so that I know, see and remember nothing. But from
what other people have told me and from what I have seen
when other Mun have prophesied I know what takes place ;
I put on the flower necklace and take up the stick and go and

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[58] Cfr. Gorer, op. cit. p. 220 sq.

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796 walk in the courtyard. (Were anybody else to put on the neck-
[888] lace on me the gods would be angry, and the rash man would receive the burden of the gods.) When I return everybody is hushed even the children.

I blow into each person's face and on the offering;
[787] then I scatter chi and prophesy in a loud and audible voice the things which are going to take place in the following half year. After the prophecy, I recover consciousness; but not till cock crow next day do I feel all right again.

755 When I am called in the case of an illness, the god does not fully enter me but I see the devil which is attacking the sick person either in the form of some animals or insect or person, depending on which devil it is. Thus Lum-dong-
[776 moong appears in a pig, Sor-moog as a dirty ragged old woman,
787] Arot-moong as a red butterfly. I see these visions out of the corner of my eye; if I look directly there is nothing there. But I watch these devils carefully out of the corner of my eye; if they go away without eating anything the patient will recover quickly; but if they take food the patient will probably die though I only tell him that the illness is very serious."[59] (fig. 19.)

(h) THE SACRIFICES OF THE MUN AND THE BONG-THING

755 We had the opportunity of being present at and observing
782 the sacrifice for a sick woman, by the Lha-ba Bong-thing (who is also a Pau). This sacrifice is called Mung-zug-fat. Mung-zug means "to cast out demons"; "fat" is sacrifice. To start with, all the things necessary for the sacrifice are kept in readiness. The Torma of rice and butter are arranged. The chi containers are filled, the butter-lamps are put up; incense and holy water are kept ready. A bullock is then brought near the front door of the house. A rope is tied to its right horn and the other end of the rope is taken into the house, and the sick woman is asked to hold it in her hand. The Bong-thing then comes near the ox and says, "Instead of the life of the woman, take the life of the ox. I am giving you the life of this ox in lieu of the life of this woman. His

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[59] op. cit. p. 220 sq.

life is of greater value than hers. Take it! The body and 755 soul of the ox are greater than those of this person. Take 782 them! Leave the people in peace." As he says this he offers chi, rice and butter, laying these three sacrificial gifts on the forehead of the animal. Then, he says with greater emphasis, "The body and the soul of this animal must be sacrificed." [774] The ox is then killed by the blow of an axe on the nape of its neck. Any one except a woman, can perform the actual killing; for if a woman were to kill the animal it would be [688] a terrible misfortune and no one would be allowed to eat the [784] meat. The head of the ox is then severed from the body and the body is carved up. The legs are taken off, the entrails and the internal organs are drawn out, the head is taken off, the thorax is divided vertically into two, and the loins with the tail are dissected.

The first part of the sacrifice is performed in front of the house near the door. Except for the head, loins, tail and the entrails, the left side of the animal is sacrificed to the demons. From the more valuable parts, *e.g.* the heart, liver, spleen, kidneys and lungs, only very small pieces are taken away for the sacrifice to the demons. The Torma for about [776] fourteen demons are placed on a little table; for Ge-be-mung, Techü-mung (the fever-demon), Tsang-dog-mung (the demon who causes stiffness in the limbs), Me-sun-mung (the life-spirit), Mög-nyan-mung, Ka-so-mu, Me-mu and others whose names we could not ascertain. It is believed that the demons are appeased through this sacrifice, that they leave the sick person and come no more into the house.

The second part of the sacrifice takes place inside the house. The right side of the animal together with the head, the more valuable parts, the entrails, the loins and the tail are ranged in the following manner: In the large room a little distance away from the fire place, the skin of the animal is spread on the floor with its hairy side down, and the tail end nearest the fire place. Over this the skull is laid at the head end, with the snout pointing to a little table which is placed against the wall opposite to the fireplace. A little behind the skull the fore and the hind legs are placed on the right and left side of it. In between the legs are laid the breast bones, the loins, the tail, entrails and the valuable parts. These cover

755 782 up the entire skin. The blood is not used at all. On the
little table that is against the wall the Tormas are deposited
778 and in front of them the two butter-lamps. The order of the
776 Tormas is as follows: (See the drawing figs. 20 & 21) 1. Rum-
755 thing-bo-a-mu, the wife of the supreme God. 2. Rum-thing-bo-
782 a-bo, the Supreme God. 3. Nyom, the daughter-in-law. 4. Rum-thing-bo-ta-gri-kōb, the son of the Supreme God. 5. San-tug-kan-dro-mu (San-tug is a place below Algara; Kan-dro-mu is evidently like the Tibetan bKa-gro-ma, a sky fairy.) 6. Don-dyō-chi-log, another spirit who personifies both the intoxicating drinks, dyō and chi. Each of these six deities has on either side of it two servants who are called Bya-ro. Torma number 2, which represents the Supreme God, is the largest. It is about five inches high, of oval shape and is decorated with ten small lumps of butter as is shown in the drawing. Torma number 1, the wife, is smaller, being about four inches high and round in shape with the same decorations of butter. Tormas number 3 to 6 are similar to number 1, except that they are three inches high only. In front of this row are three Ka to, Tormas number 7, 8 & 9. In a squarish socket five cone shaped objects are placed. These are perhaps symbolical of the five-peaked mountain, but we could find out nothing more definite about them. Torma number 10 is a deity, Ka-to-sam or Gon-hiu-so. It is about two inches high, conical in shape, and decorated with streaks of butter. The Tormas of the Bya-ro servants are all alike, a little smaller and devoid of decorations. Before the table on which are placed the Tormas and the butter-lamps, there are five bamboo vessels and a wooden cup filled with chi. The cup, which stands fourth from the left, has its rim decorated with three little lumps of butter and is called San-dyō. We notice here again the names "chi" and "dyō" borne by the sixth deity. In front of these vessels there is a second small table, and six piles of rice placed on six banana leaf-plates lie on it. On top of each pile of rice are deposited a rib of the sacrifice and tiny pieces of the heart, liver, lung, spleen and kidneys. The number SIX is therefore a standard,—there are six principal gods, six chi containers, six piles of rice and six pieces of meat.

A banana leaf-plate containing rice is placed behind the skin on which the pieces of sacrificial flesh had been placed.

[Text continues on p. 63]

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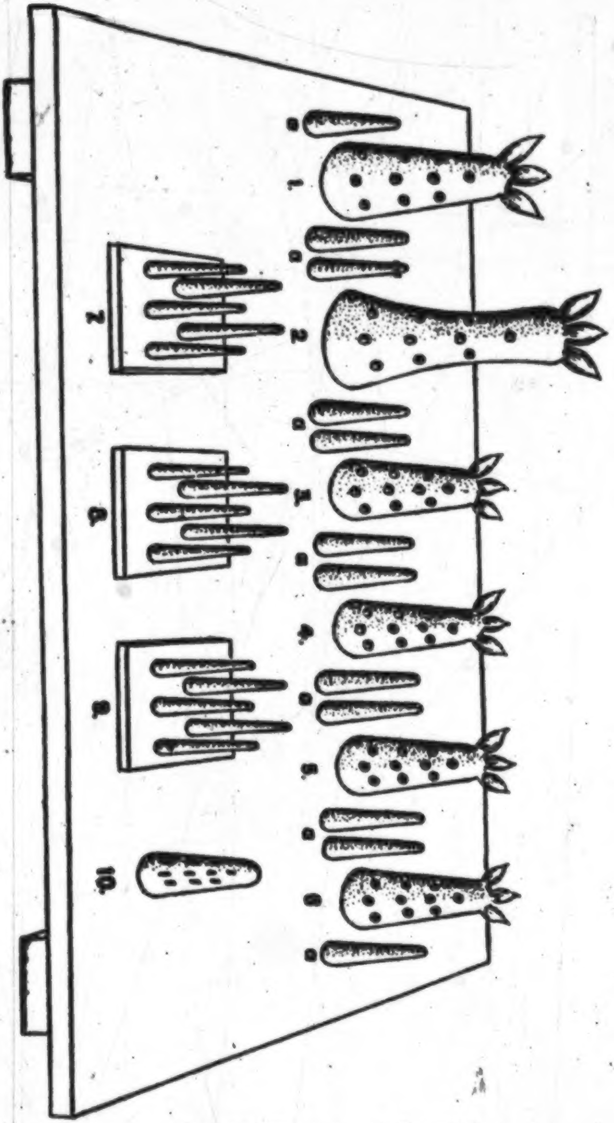
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Fig. 20, Tormas of the gods

11;Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954

AK5 Lepcha AK5

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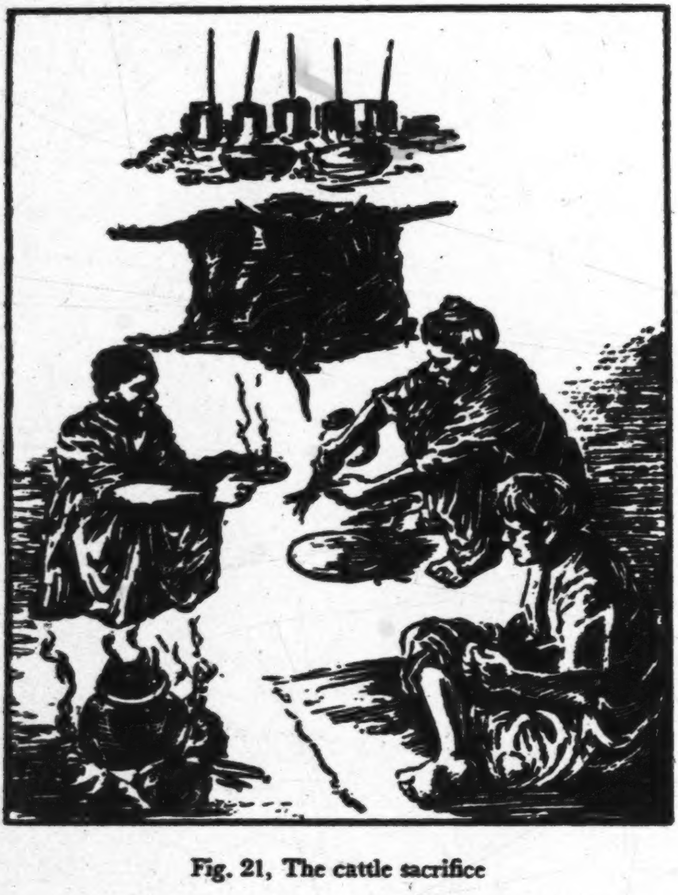

Fig. 21, The cattle sacrifice

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On the right side of this plate is an earthenware pot filled with 782
water. The Bong-thing sits in front of the sacrifice with his [778
back to the fire. Beside him is an assistant holding a brazier 776]
with incense. The incense consists of dried twigs from the
cypress trees of Tibet. The Lepchas call the tree "dag-döl-gung." [illegible]
The priest takes in his right hand the "purifier" 293]
which is made out of three branches of Amliso, *i.e.* Po-chior.
He then summons the god and when the branches move to [787]
and fro, it is a sign that the spirit has come. Now the Bong-thing
begins the sacrificial prayer, "Sang so (incense is burnt) ;
tza ni bu tza lo ! tzab den bu geno ! (Incense offering !
Tibetan name—magic formula, praying it, holy water is to
be sprinkled from the pitcher ; it appears to be corrupt
Tibeta tzab, which is the same as chab, signifying water.) 776

"To the star god, the Gun dö god, the sun god, the Sam 755
yig god, the Sog god, the Göm shi god, the Göm yu god (I make) 782
this offering of incense. The offering (I make) in the smoke
of incense. Come hither O gods ! Gold Torma and money
Torma I offer in sacrifice. Come hither Ka to and Gon hiu.
I offer in sacrifice. Spirit of the millet beer—and spirit of the
rice offering come hither. The sacrifice is offered, the incense
offering is made. tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno (magic
formula). Goddess Amu mōn mu, Ha mu, Mi lig mu, Miā
song mu, Chu mu, Yuk mu, Se mu ; son Chu go ri go chen
chen, daughter-in-law Nyom mu, father and mother ![60]

[60] sa hor rum bu gun dö rum bu sa daug rum bu sam yig rum bu [539]
(to the) star god, Gun dö god, sun god, Sam yig god,

sog rum bu göm shi rum bu göm yu rum bu sang blong ga
Sog god, Gom shi god, Göm yu god, offering of incense

pö blong ga ! (incense is offered here) kög ma o ! dyär pa dong, gom pu
in smoke, incense offering, in smoke ! come here ! Gold Torma, money

dong dzān dong dām dong hiu o ! Ka to gon chiu blong ga ! dzān dong
Torma sacrifice ! sacrifice ! Ka to and Gon hiu come here! sacrifice,

hiu dām dong hiu ma o. Chi log so log
sacrifice ! Millet beer(spirit), rice offering (spirit)

blong ga dzān dong hiu dām dong hiu o ! ön sang so ! sang so !
come here ! sacrifice ! sacrifice! Incense offering, incense offering!

tza ni bu tza lo ! tzab den bu geno ! Amu mōn mu, ha mu, mi lig mu,
(Magic formula while water is sprinkled) (All are names for the wife of

miā song mu, chu mu, yuk mu, se mu ; chu go ri go chen chen bu
the God). (Name of the son of the Supreme God)

776 I offer the smoke of incense. Come hither! To the father and to
755 the mother I offer gold Torma, I offer money Torma; I offer,
762 I offer, I offer incense to San tug kan dro mu; come hither! I offer incense; come hither! I offer to Chi, the millet beer spirit, to the rice offering spirit, to Dyö, the millet beer spirit; come hither! Verify this, O God, that we are sick. Come hither and tell it; come here and say it. How the head is racked with pain, the loins ache, the body, the hands, the feet are paining and the belly is aching, this O God verify. Come hither and state it. How the demons bite that examine ye gods; come here and tell it. In this manner I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person. As a substitute for the body and the soul I offer this bull. I offer this substitute of life; I sacrifice this bound bull as a substitute for the body. I sacrifice this bound bull to Ge bu."[60a]

[539] [60a] nyom mu   yab yum pong
(Daughter-in-law of the Supreme God).   Father, mother (Tibetan names for the whole family of the God.)

sang blong ga   kög ma o !   yab yum dyär pa dong
I offer smoke of incense ! Come here ! To Father, Mother I offer gold Torma.

gom pa dong   dzän dong hiu   fat ma o
I offer money Torma, I offer !   I offer !

San tug kan dro mu sang blong ga   kög gad mao.
To San tug Kan dro mu offer of incense !   Come here !

plö blong ga kög gad mao !
offer of incense,   come here !

chi log   so log   sang dyö ma djän   blong ga
Millet beer (spirit),   Rice offer (spirit),   Millet beer (spirit)   offer !

kög gad mao go yu song dog non   rum dyop ga   plö buo dön ga
Come here ! That we are sick, examine this O God now.   Come here and tell us.

plö   buo   sareb song adyak non
Come here and say it.   How the head aches,

achyang dog non   me so dog non   a go a teng dog
the loins pain,   the body pains,   hands and feet pain,

ta bak dog   a yu rum pong dyop ga   plö buo !
the belly aches. O God examine these things.   Come here and tell it.

an sareb song   mung nöng tzug bang ga rum dyop ga   plö buo
How the demons bite examine that ye gods.   Come here and tell it.

alom bö mad   big djäk chim yu re söm
In this way I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person.

me sö löm   sa lo löm   big bu
As a body substitute, as a soul substitute   I sacrifice this bull.

sök löm bu   me sö löm
I sacrifice this substitute of life, as a body substitute

big djäk bu mo   Ge bu long big   long djäk bu mo.
this bound bull I sacrifice.   To the Ge bu, this bull, this bound bull I sacrifice."

During the prayer, the one who performed the sacrifice 755
added the expression "lang nam" in chosen places; it means 782
"the year of the bull," because the sick person was born in the [805]
year of the bull. Lang is the Tibetan expression for the
Zodiac bull. As the prayer ended, the assistant took some of [776]
the sacrificial meat, rice and chi and offered it to Me-sum-mung,
the demon who represents the life-principle.

And so the sacrifice came to an end. The portions of meat
were cleared away. The fore and hind legs and the valuable [793]
parts were given to the priest. The remainder of the meat,
as also the skin, were sold in order to enable the family to make [432]
a little money. A very small portion of the meat was eaten immediately
after the sacrifice. These sacrifices involve a heavy
expenditure for the family; often many sacrifices are offered
for the same illness if it is protracted, and this causes the ruin
of many people. Hence many prefer to invite the lamaistic 782
monks of the Brug-pa sect, because they are willing to drive
out demons of illness at lesser expense.

A female Mun, Mai-li-mo-la-dza-ni, whose personal 793
name is Chin-dün, and who lives near Git-biyong described
a similar sacrificial ceremony to us which she holds at the 796
ripening of the millet crop. The preparatory arrangements 782
for the sacrifice are the same as mentioned above, with the
following differences: There are only five Tormas for the five [778
deities namely: Sa-dzug-rum, the sun god who is regarded 776]
as the Supreme Being, Ni-gung-mön, his wife, Ta-dik-köb,
the son, Nyom, the daughter-in-law, and San-tug-kan-dro-mu.
There are again two lamps, but five bamboo containers containing
chi, five banana leaves with rice, five varieties of meat,
and incense, and holy water containers. She is helped by
her personal spirits who are Darmit, Dartik, Sang-mu, Dang-mu-rum,
Asog-rum, Tzang-rum. The sacrifice progresses
in the same sequence as above. This Mun was twenty years
old when she fell ill with heart trouble. The Bong-thing
A-du said to her, "You must become Mun." She was an
apprentice to the female Mun Dja-ge-mo. In addition to her [293]
Mun belief, she also practises Lamaism, and has a little prayer
wheel and prayer cord. We could not obtain the text of
the prayers used in her sacrifice.

755 From the Gu-gu Bong-thing we procured the text of
782 another prayer said during the sacrifice of a sick person: "Fa
776 dong dju and Fa dong dō, Gom shi, Gom yu gods! (invocation).
The earth was created, the water was created, the whole
world was created. The millet beer offering chi and the rice
offering so were created. The Tōg bu ta she was created.
Come hither, ye spirits. For the benefit of the creatures, of
the world, and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this
manner. Against suffering and harm I sacrifice. For myself
I sacrifice. To the house-hold gods I sacrifice. As it has
been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation,
so must we sacrifice. Then to the deities of this house (of the
sick man), to the Great God of the aTzam sacrifice, to the gods
[774] of the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man), to the Darmit[61]

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[539] [61] Fa dong dju fa dong dō
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō (names for the male and female family gods; dong is the tribal name; dju is the male Himalayan mountain spirit; dō is the female spirit, that comes from the river).

gom shi gom yu rum lyang it ung it
Gom shi and Gom yu gods! The earth was created, the water was created,

lyang sōg dōm it chi log so log it
the whole world was created. Millet beer offering, rice offering were created.

lyang tōg bū ta she it ga.
Then Tōg bu ta she was created. (This is Tak bo thing or Ta she thing so often mentioned, who was the first man or the son of the Supreme God Ta she thing.)

plō sog dōm long ming
Come here! (invitation to the spirits). For the creature's interests of the

dam ga son dŏn dog ga alom sug bam
whole world and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this manner.

adog anot sa pe ka sug bam
Against suffering and harm I sacrifice.

ga do sug to bam rum dar ngag to bam
For myself I sacrifice also. To the household gods I sacrifice at once.

yang ayit plō nōng
Likewise as it has been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation

sug gad bam along do do li rum
thus must we make sacrifice. Now to the deities of this house, to the

atzam athing rum
Great God of the aTzam sacrifice (aTzam sacrifice is the name of the sacrifice which is laid on the bull's forehead, as we saw above),

mung gung man la rum pong darmit rum pong
to the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man) gods, Darmit gods,

755
and the Dartik gods, to the water and the flood gods, to all 782
the gods together I sacrifice now. To our life-spirits and 776
soul gods, to Darmit, the god of life's destiny, to Alat and [774]
Ayek, the gods of procreation, to the benefactors of the souls, to the gods who lend the strength of life, I must sacrifice, since I know how to do so. The god of my personal destiny is witness; if I do not sacrifice—then may a long illness come. But if I do know how to perform the right sacrifice—that is a godly thing. If I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice but sacrifice, that is a devilish thing. If I do not perform the right sacrifice—then may the demons come here. In this manner, O Ayek and Alat, come to this spot here. Traitors shall we be to the ancestral gods if we, the descendants, sacrifice in this (wrong) way. Thus we sacrifice (rightly) as is our duty. As our ancestors did—so do we honour (the gods) We, the living, set on this spot(bull's head) millet beer and[61].

61a. dartik rum pong [539]
Dartik gods (both are supposed to be female and male messengers, who bring news to the priest who performs the sacrifice; they are familiar deities of the Lepchas)

ung fat ung glum rum pong sug ngag la bam
to the water and the flood goods, to them altogether I sacrifice now.

dö dö dzam bi dzam myong rum pong khing trung darmit rum pong
Our own life-spirits and soul gods, god of life's destiny, Darmit,

ayek alat rum pong dzö bön pu rum pong
gods of procreation, Ayek and Alat, gods as benefactors of the soul,

ong bon pu rum pong djü la mat mong
the gods who lend the strength of life; if I know how to sacrifice, so

sug yu gong nön dö dö khing trung go nöng sug ma yön gong
I must do it. The god of my personal destiny knows it; if I do not

nön dö dö a rö a riom plö cho djü la nag yö
sacrifice, then may a long illness come, come. But if I do know

gong la rum göm
how to perform the right sacrifice, then is that a godly thing.

djö la sug ma yö nöng gong na mung göm
But if I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice that is a demonish thing.

dö dö sug la ma yöng gong na mung ni gom
If I do not perform the right sacrifice, then shall the demon be here.

a lom sog döm ga ayek alat plö
In this way and at this place Ayek and Alat come here!

nyö ting sa rum göm go yu gab djong
We shall not become traitors to the ancestral gods, if we,

ati adno nong ga su gad shö bu sa yuk
the descendants, sacrifice in this way. It is our duty to sacrifice thus.

rnö thing ga sing long fat sa yuk gom
As our ancestors did, so we also do honour in this way.

go yu son nin sog döm ga chi log so log mat nön.
We, the living, set on this spot (head of the bull) millet beer and rice-offering.

755 rice-offerings. Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestors in ancient
782 times did—so do we now. We do not know how to speak in
776 this world; but we have arranged the sacrifice. As this world's life-spirit we, creatures, hold the branches of the Na sö and Na ling trees. We, the sons of Bong-thing, the Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. That is the place to carry the Na sö and Na ling branches which I take consciously. Now I swear an oath to Ta she tak bo thing. Therefore I push a stone into the earth and I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth (as witnesses of the oath). In this place I take the oath. I do it in our own interest. Today, in this very place I take the oath. The paths of the demons are barred. Through the wonderful powers of Ta she tak bo thing I offer this sacrifice. Henceforward we offer a compensation, a bodily substitute: Send no more suffering to this person."[61b]

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[539] [61b] Fat bam a re a thing a niö sa dal thing gung dö si syit
Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestor did since ancient times,
plö nöng sug bam
so we also perform the sacrifice.
sog döm lyang ga go yusöng dön ma kön go yu rum
In this world we do not know how we should speak. We have arranged
tek
so sog
the sacrifice (rum, god, has also the meaning of sacrifice). As this
döm löng ming tang ga son chio nin cho sa liang ga na sö na ling
world's life spirit we, creatures, hold here branches of the Na sö and Na ling
nom
bong thing köb
trees (similar to the Nepalese Panisage and Sau tree). We, Bong-thing sons,
bong thing la mi köb nöng ga sog döm ga
we, Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. Here in this place carrying
na sö na ling nom hö nöng go tzam nöng ga.
the Na sö na ling branches, I take hold of them consciously.
ta she tak bo thing riak to long tzog.
To Ta she tak bo thing I swear an oath. I push a stone into the earth.
bu tzum bu yak to nön
I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth. (This ceremony takes place at the swearing and oath taking, so that the oath is sworn over the stone and the bamboo, which are placed side by side.)
sog döm riak to sön tön do ga
Here in this place I take the oath. In our own interest I do it.
sa rong sa ni riak are to nön sog döm ga
Just today I take the oath here. Thus here in this place
mung sa lom chat are tak bo she thing sa
the demons' ways are barred. Now through Tak bo she things' wonder-
a dyän sa löm nöng to Along ren me sü löm
powers, I bring this sacrifice. From now on, a bodily substitute, a
sa lö löm bo son areka gi dök ma bin
compensation we give. Send no more suffering to this person."

The ceremonies are the same as those described above. 782
Each Bong-thing has his own texts. The general scheme is, 776
however, the same. Emphasis is always laid on the claim 773
that they are based on the old traditions. The following text proves this in a particular manner :

"The genesis of Chi, the genesis of the intoxicating drink Dyŏ. This arose from an old tradition. The place of origin is where the Sang li and Sang log trees originated. In the interest of the whole world and for our use, O messenger of God, come hither. Tak bo thing, the wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world. Now again come down for the creation of the world. Like the tradition of the Rong, the tradition of the sons of Bong-thing came in place of the Bamboo books. It is the custom of the ten Rong sons to make a synopsis of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the water, and of the whole world.[62] The world of the

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[62] "Fiang it dyŏ it
Chi's genesis, Dyŏ's intoxication genesis ! (fiang is millet beer, and is looked [539]
on as female ; dyŏ is an intoxicating drink, made from a substance different than millet, and is looked on as a male).

lung tăn o ba nang plŏ sang li sang log cho sa lyang ga plŏ
This arose from an old tradition. The place of origin is where the Sang li

Sang log pair of trees originated ! (Several holy trees are known. Na-sŏ and Na-ling were already mentioned. Two others are called Mong-chial and Sŏ-brio. They make three bundles of branches from these trees. One is planted in front of the altar, The Mun or Bong-thing holds the two others in his hands when he wishes to prophesy. These holy trees are expressly created and handed to men by God for ritual purposes. This is an analogy of the tree of the world).

sog dŏm tam ga son sa dăn dog ga rum fig rum plŏ
In the interest of the whole world and for our use, messenger of God come here!
(fig rum is the messenger or servant of God).

Tak bo thing sa a dyăn rum lyang it ga da mu
Tak bo thing, wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world.

lyang it ga da rong sa lung tăn
For the creation of the world come down here. As the Rong tradition, the

bong thing kob sa po mik po thong chio sa lung tăn plŏ
Bong-thing sons' tradition, came in place of the bamboo books. The synopsis

lyang it ung it yang ming yang song
of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the creation of water, of the creation of the whole world

782 demons also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, a loving 776 and adequate blessing to all. According to the origin of the [773] tradition of our ancestors, our grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren must perfectly act. Then only shall we be blessed. If we fail to act in this manner [688] it will bring us no good. The Dar gods will destroy the heart. But if we act in the manner prescribed, our ancient forbears, gods of destiny—the Darmit—will prepare an abundance of good things. If we do not know how to act in the right manner, the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, will always be angry at heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, is pleased always, the heart will always find joy. The Primeval God, the God of abundance, will himself give us the joy. The god, Fat dzag yö sa fi, will be pleased always. If all of us, creatures, perform the adoration through sacrifice, we shall obtain the rich rewards of the sacrifice. If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured by sacrifice we shall be given a house.[62a]

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[539] 62a. to pong sa lung tän rong köb ga ti sa tim bam mung sa sog
is the custom of the ten Rong sons. The world of the demons
döm are ga bam mung ka tön sö pe tyo
also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, loving and
gön gä tag göng sa mön lam ma tong dö do abu amu sa lung tän plo
adequate blessing to all. As our ancestors' tradition
nong sa ga yu sön nin köb song ni tönön sug lang bam sö lang bam
originated thus, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren
must act accordingly, and indeed perfectly act.
go yu chin lob top chio. sug ma gön na log non
Then shall we receive blessings. If we do not act so it will be bad.
rum dar pong la söm d,u chogu yu sug lang bam dö do niu thing sa yo
The Dar gods will kill the heart. If we act so, our ancient ancestors'
king tzum darmit rum pong la ayot ni chio go yu sug ma
gods of destiny, the Darmit, will prepare abundance. If we do not
gön gong na da lyang sa kyu rum
know how to act accordingly the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la süm kio cho da lyang sa kyu rum
will always have an angry heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la go gong sum riu cho ayot rum
is always pleased, the heart will be happy. The God of abundance,
pum rum hö do nöm chio. fat dzag yö sa fi rum na la go hio
the Primeval God himself will give it. Fat dzag yö sa fi god will always be pleased.
go yu sog döm ga son min nöng fat yu gong na
If we all in this world, if we creatures perform the adoration through sacrifice,
fat sa ayot top chio
then shall we obtain the riches of the sacrifice.
Chiö rum ayot ayit rum fat yu gong
If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured through sacrifice
li top chio dö do nio myu sug gang
then shall we obtain a house. If we accomplish much work in our fields

If we accomplish a great amount of work in our fields we shall 782
obtain an abundance of things. Darmit (god) will always 776
grant us a happy destiny. If the lines in our foot and palms are worn out through much work, we shall obtain an abundance of things. If you do not understand how to work, you will not obtain the fruits of blessing. We honour Dar by an adoration of God. I shall perform this work until I sweat blood. Thus I work. A handful, a finger-tip-ful of the sacrifice is offered to the gods of procreation in the other life. Take it, O God, as many sacrifices. These are the fruits of the earth. All people together offer rice. When we sacrifice, many should do it together. That is the right way. God will then be at peace. But if we do not do it, then the gods of procreation will be displeased with us. We, living this life, must eat and work. If we do not work, God will not love us. The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.[8th]

[8th] ayot top chio — dō do king tzum darmit na la go chio [539]
we shall obtain abundance. — A good fate, Darmit god will always grant us.

dyang dzum — gō dzum — säd dyet sug gan sa — ayot top chio
If our foot and hand-lines are all worn out through much works, we shall obtain abundance.

sug ma gōn na mong — gong nō chiu
If you do not understand how to work you will not obtain

lap apot ma top na — rum sa chiong — dar sō chiong
the fruits of blessings. — As adoration of God we honour Dar.

alat sug vi ai flet nōng ga — sug bō nang yug sug
I will do this work till I sweat blood. — Thus I work.

mō tsō a ping ga — ayek rum ga — go ri go chion dza
In the other life to the gods of procreation, a handful, a fingertipful

apōt — rum ga blad nom pō tat chio
of the sacrifice is offered. — God, take it as many sacrifices.

apot sug dam are ga bam — mang sa min de pō nōng
The fruits of this earth are of this kind. — All people together offer rice.

sa hō tōng sa sug lang adyap — do sug gad gang na
When we sacrifice, then many should do it together. — Then is it right.

rum na la — ago ni chio — sug ma gōn na
For God it will then be peace. — If we do not do it, then will the

ayek alat rum na la ga yum hium non ne. — tsō are ga bam ba sug la yo sam
gods of procreation be displeased with us. — We, living in this life,

la yong gad chio — sug la ma yu na — gang la rum na la
must work and eat. — If we do not work, then God will

ago ma mad ni rum pum thing bō do sa dōn ga — lōd nan chiong ta tsād djō
never love us. — The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.

782
776 But we fail to understand it. We are naked at the time of our birth. Now too we are naked. When time will cease for us, the time of our death, it is impossible to say. [761] We cannot give any news of the land of the gods. And at the time God calls us, mother and father cannot call us back. When the day of death is at hand, neither elder brothers, sisters, children nor daughters-in-law can call us back. When the day of the Lord dawns, then indeed has death passed away."[62c] The sacrificial texts quoted give us an idea of their vast varieties.

(*i*) OTHER SACRIFICES

791
782 Although the Mun and the Bong-thing wield such a great influence over and dominate the whole sacrificial organisation, there are all the same, some sacrifices which do not come within their sphere.

An old Lepcha said to us, "For our original sacrifice we, the Rong folk, offer the intoxicating drink Chi, in a wooden vessel together with rice and small dried birds on a banana leaf-plate. The Chi had to be prepared by a young girl who [784] was still a virgin. The little birds had to be shot by a young lad who had had no sexual relations with anyone. The

[539] [62c] go yu ma dyak ne djek go rung a gün do
But we do not understand it. At the time of our birth we are naked,

djek lo tang ka träd ga la a gün lo tang gäm
at present time we are also naked. When our time is over

amäx sa sut de dön ma gön
to tell the time of our death, that is not possible.

rum lyang sa sut ma gön
To give news of the land of the gods is not possible.

rum nöng lo lek dö träd ga abu amu lin ma gön chiang chia
At the time when God calls us, father and mother cannot call us.

pe plö lad chiang gam anam anom aköb ason
When the day of death is coming, elder brothers, elder sisters, children and

nyom li ma top sag ni rum sa sag ni tag nam che lat nan
daughter-in-law can no longer call us. When the day of God is coming, then is death passing away."

sacrifice is called Rum-fat or Lyang-rum-fat. It is performed 796 782 once a year in honour of Rum or Pum-thing-rum somewhere in December or January. The flesh of the little birds can be dispensed with at this sacrifice, but the rice and Chi are essential. Generally it is the master of the house who is also the family priest who performs the sacrifice, but it can be performed by 796 782 anyone who understands the rites."[63]

Sam-sing from Maria-Basti has described to us the 224 hunter's sacrifice in the following terms : "The Supreme God [776] whom we honour originally was called Assal. We do not know any more where he lives, and so each tribe honours its own god of the hunters. In the Yok-song-mo tribe to which I belong we practise the cult of the Mut. For this we keep cocks. Whenever we go out a-hunting we take a cock and present it to the god of the hunters. After the hunt the cock is killed and sacrificed to the god, and its flesh is consumed by us.

A part of the game killed at every hunt has to be offered to Mut. We cut little pieces from each part of the body of the animal wrap them up in leaves and offer them up to the god. After the sacrifice has been offered we eat the meat ourselves. No woman is ever allowed to be present at the sacrifice to Mut." [784] Another member of the Rong tribe called this god of the hunters [776] by the name of Dju-thing. He honours him in the manner described above. He also stressed the fact that a woman is never allowed to take part in, nor even to look on, this sacrifice to the hunting god.

Gorer describes a sacrifice which all hunters offer together in the month of October, *viz.* the sacrifice to Mut-rum-Tseu or Pong-rum, the protector of wild animals and patron of hunters. The wife of this god is called Shing-rum. The sacrifice consists of roasted corn, chi, dried fish and birds, ginger, arum roots and a few other tubers, sugar-cane, banana, and worm-wood flowers. No woman is allowed to know what [784 is being prepared. She is not allowed to come near. The 841] presence of a woman who is having her menstrual period is regarded as particularly dangerous. Chi must be prepared by a virgin or she should at least pour it into a vessel. The birds must be procured by a chaste youth. If a deer has

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[63] Report from Kalimpong.

782 796 224 been killed, then it is imperative that a sacrifice to the hunting god must be performed. The animal is already carved up in the forest. To quote Gorer : "Big leaves are cut and put on the ground and then the animal is divided up and the head is put in front with a foreleg and third leg on either side and singed intestines in the middle. This is all offered to Pong-rum, and the hunter crouching behind and speaking very softly and slowly, gently throws the burnt intestines bit by bit [784] over the animal's head. On his return to the village great care must be taken to see that no woman sees the animal's head ; if she does, the hunter will have no success in future."[64]

The sacrifice of the hunters are a replica of the primitive sacrificial ceremonies. There is, however, a new element which comes to the forefront in the present sacrifices, *viz.* the strict exclusion of all women ;—the women may not even be spectators, or even so much as see the head of the animal which has been killed and which is to serve as a victim at the sacrifice. The virginity of the youth and the maiden who prepare the sacrificial materials, is strongly emphasised. Such hunting sacrifices are well known among many primitive tribes in India, *e.g.* among the Irulas, Kurumbas, etc.

411 The Rong believe that the bow and arrow which they require for hunting are given to them by the deity, and that even the game is, so to say, given over to them by the deity. This enables us to get a better idea of the sacrifice to the god 773 of the hunters. One of the legends recorded by Stocks runs as follows, "Once upon a time Tashey-thing made friends with Mon-tsu-mot, a wild she-boar whom he married and with whom he lived happily for ten years. Not far away from their home was a great rock hanging over a precipice where a rock bee (vot) had its hive, and Tashey-thing wished to bring the honey home one day himself. It was a very dangerous task to reach the rock even with the aid of a rope ; and Tashey-thing, being helped by many animals and insects, made them all swear to hold the rope firmly and not to let it go. But his wife Mon-tsu-mot was not faithful, and wished to get rid of Tashey-thing.

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[64] op. cit. p. 244 sq.

Koeng was one of the beetle rope holders, for it was the time of the year when he lives and sings for three months; the bak-dyol was another beetle who also comes out at this time, whilst the dyang-dyang (another beetle) was also alive, so he came too. So did Neprik-nyom, the grass-hopper and lots of other insects—all helped Tashey-thing who started climbing down the rope.

But almost immediately Mon-tsu-mot cut it, and all the animals and insects became so frightened that they ran away at once. Tashey-thing saved himself by holding on to the rock with one of the hairs from his moustache, and we Rong folk believe to this day that leaves from the bush we find hanging down from fry rocks, which has a grey colour like the tint of the thatching grass, and which is soft like hair, originates from the one hair that saved his life. He was wondering how he would release himself from his peril when a monkey happened to pass, who asked him what he was doing.

Tashey-thing told him he had come down to take some honey from the rock, but his wife, Mon-tsu-mot, with some animals and insects who had promised to help him, had played a nasty trick and cut the rope they had been holding.

So the monkey took him off the rock, and putting him on his back, told him he was to keep his eyes closed until he knew by the sound that he, the monkey, was walking; he was on no account to open them especially when they were rustling through the leaves.

Now when Tashey-thing was put down in a safe place, he told the monkey for a reward he would give him gold, silver or anything he asked for. But the monkey did not want gold or silver. 'Give me,' he said, 'a blessing instead, that will help me to have the first fruits of every field in harvest time.'

And Tashey-thing gave him the blessing.

~~But he~~ cursed the rock bees, saying much trouble had come to him through them, and that it would be no sin for the Rong folk to take their honey away in future.

Then Tashey-thing planted a species of bamboo (the bling) and when it had grown big enough he made a bow from it, then he planted another bamboo (the pa-song) from which he made an arrow. Then for three years he followed

773 the footprint of Mon-tsu-mot, and passing through nine countries and crossing nine ranges of mountains, he found the wild boar at last sleeping in a lair she had made from dry leaves. Then he aimed with his arrow and killing her, he collected firewood and commenced to burn her. Whilst he was roasting her, some hot fat fell from her body, and a drop falling on his thumb made him lick it off.

Then he cursed all wild boars, saying it would be no sin henceforth if the Rong folk were to kill and eat them. So we, the Rong folk, believe from that day, we can eat the flesh of the wild boar, which we never did formerly when she was Tashey-thing's wife. It was also then that the bow and arrow were invented.

Then being a widower, Tashey-thing married Gnyul-chul who was a fish, and said once as they came to a river he would carry her across on his back. Gnyul-chul did not like the idea and told Tashey-thing he ought to make a bridge. He made a bamboo one and just as they were nearly across, knowing she would annoy him, Gnyul-chul tumbled off his back and dropped in.

Then Tashey-thing became angry, and running downstream he placed a bamboo fishing net (a yet) in the middle of the river. Catching her on the third day, he found that the arms and legs of Gnyul-chul had become fins, whilst the rest of her body was still that of a woman.

The moment Tashey-thing had caught her he made a fire and burnt her. Some fat fell from her body, and dropped on his thumb which he licked off, and he cursed fish saying that from that day it would be no sin for a human being to kill and eat them. So we, the Rong folk, believe from that day we can catch and eat fish, which we did not do when a fish was the wife of Tashey-thing.

So he was once more a widower, and he blessed us the Rong folk and said we should be as abundant as the bushes and trees in the jungle, and that until the monkey died out there, we should not die out.

After blessing us, Tashey-thing returned once more to the country of the Rum (heaven)."[66]

[66] Stocks, op. cit. p. 381 sq.

In another legend it is told how the bear was given to the 773
Rong as game to be hunted. "One day the ancestor of the
ptso was going through the forest when he came on what he
thought was a dead bear ; but really this bear was an incar- [776]
nation of Pong rum, the king of all animals and patron god of hunters who was at the moment taking a rest outside his incarnate body. The ancestor cut up the animal and ate part of it ; whereupon Pong rum appeared to him and said, 'You have eaten part of my body ; henceforward you and your children must serve me and worship me and make offerings to me. Henceforward also you and your children may eat all animals, even snakes, with impunity.' This is the reason
why the people of Pantoong could eat and enjoy snakes, [262]
whereas the rest of us would die if we ate them."[66] From these legends it appears clearly that the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing, gave to the Rong folk wild boar, bear, fish and honey as food and taught them to use bow and arrows, to shoot the game, and to catch fish with the net.

It has already been mentioned above that Pong rum, the 776
god of the hunters, goes by different names depending on 224
whether he drives towards the hunters, the game from the 825
slopes of the highest mountains, or from the foot of the mountains or the plains. It appears also that these animals are looked upon as manifestations of the deity. The following story, related to us by the son of the A-chi Bong-thing who hails from a famous hunting family, lends support to this
theory. "We were hunting in the thick virgin forests at the [538]
foot of the mountains at the beginning of the plains. Suddenly I came across an enormous bull with mighty horns. The bull was asleep ; yet, the sight of this gigantic animal so terrified me that I staggered, as one drunk, to the ground and felt as if my soul had left my body. That could only be the hunting god and it was useless to shoot, as he was proof against wounds. The bull awoke, stood erect, and with a thunderous bellowing drove the cows and calves further into the forest. We with-
drew as quickly as we could and fled for safety." The hunters 224
call the Mithan Sa-dzug-big in the Lepcha language. They 136
say that he usually lives in the higher mountains as far as the

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[66] Gorer, op. cit. p. 56.

224 Tibetan frontier, but in the winter he descends into the plains.
136 He is very difficult to hunt because he is the largest of cattle, bigger even than the Tibetan Yak, which they name Yok (clearly a rendering of the Tibetan name). They have never seen a wild yak, and so are unable to compare its size. Unfortunately for me I did not succeed in seeing a Sa-dzug-big, but I obtained sufficient information to establish the difference between the Mithan, Gaur, Gayal—a question which is very confused.

136 Great confusion is caused by the change and interchange of names. In North India we find the wild cattle called the Gaur. The Gaur (*Bos gaurus*) is an enormous animal which sometimes attains a height of 21 hands. The upper part of its neck is cylinder-shaped. The forehead is deeply concave. There is no dewlap. The horns are regularly poised and bend inwards at the end. But the sharpest curve is not at the end. The colour of the adult animal, especially the old bull, is deep brown, practically black. The Gaur has been erroneously called the bison. The very same description given by us above was given also in the case of the Mithan. The Gaur only inhabits the mountains and hilly countries and cannot be tamed. The Mithan is also a mountain animal and
136 is very difficult to handle in captivity. The inhabitants of
231 Sikkim say that the Mithan cannot be tamed, but that the
825 wild bulls do mate with the domesticated cows. The mixed
offspring are then tamed. In the second and later generations there is a very marked difference from the wild ancestry. The greatest height is only 17 hands and the dewlap is developed. The horns are no longer regularly poised, nor are they curved inwards;—the greatest distance between the horns being now at the points. Even the colour is no longer identical.

Let us now explain why a confusion prevails over the names. The wild cattle in the Himalayas are called Mithan in Nepalese, and Sa-dzug-big in the Lepcha language. The natives say that the wild bulls cannot be tamed, but that they do mate with the domesticated cows. This intermixed breed is called Paluwa-Mithan in Nepalese, and Pamen in Lepcha. The ordinary cattle are called Siri-gay in Nepalese and Niu-big in Lepcha. The cross between these animals and the very small Nepalese cattle is called Pahare-gay in Nepalese and Nam-tha in Lepcha. The Tibetan Yak is called Tschangri-gay in Nepalese, and Yok-big in Lepcha. The water buffalo is Arna in Nepalese and Nin-big in Lepcha. The names Gaur and Gayal, as we see, do not appear. 136 [231 885]

The Mithan sacrifice and cult play a very important part in the religious sphere of the Nagas. The Sema Nagas call the wild Mithan "aviela," the cross of this wild cattle with the domesticated cattle is "avi"; the cross of avi achuka (black humped cattle) is aselhu, the cross Avi with Kolaghu (ordinary cattle) is avyega or vivghu. 136 171

In the Chongli (C) and Mongsen (M) dialect of the Ao Naga, cross of the wild bull and the cow is called sü and atsü (M); the ordinary cow nashi (C) and masü (M); the progeny of the above cross and the ordinary cow mukza (C & M).[67] We suppose that all the natives have such special names and that they certainly draw a distinction between the different varieties of animals. The confusion arose from the fact that the Europeans and Indians regarded the Mithan and Gayal as one (*Bos frontalis*). The wild Mithan and the Gaur are different local variations of the same animal. Apart from this, it is clear that the two different wild breeds do not overlap each other in their geographical distribution. This would have been the case if the Mithan and Gaur were two different species of wild cattle. East of the Bay of Bengal the Banteng (*Bos sondaicus*) appears as a new breed.[68]

The names Gaur and Gayal originate from Hindi. The Sanskrit root "go" means bull and cow; and gavah, the plural, cattle. The modern Hindi name is derived from these: gay and gau, cow; gava, wild cattle, from which gaur is derived; gavya and gayaval—"that which appertains to the cow." Gayal is then derived from gayaval, as the bastard is not the ordinary type of cattle but is associated with the cow.

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[67] J. P. Mills, The Ao Nagas, London 1926, p. 122 sq.

[68] E. C. Baker, The Gaur and the Gayal, (Bos gaurus and bos frontalis). The Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, Vol. xv, 227 sq., T. R. Livesey, The Gayal or Mithan (Bos frontalis), id. Vol. p. 190 sq., W. S. Thom, Some notes on Bison (Bos gaurus) in Burma, id. Vol. p. 108 sq., W. T. Blanford, On the Gaur (Bos gaurus) and its allies, from the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, Vol. VI. 1891, 222 sq., M. Hermanns, Were animals first domesticated and bred in India? Journal of the Bombay Branch Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XXVII, Pt.II, 1952, p. 134 sq.

136 Gaval and Arna are the Hindi names for the water-
[71] buffalo. In Bombay State, as far as the Central Provinces the name Ran bhainsa, water buffalo, is used for Gaur. In Mahrathi, it is pronounced gavya ; in Tamil, katuerimai ; in Malayalam, karthu ; in Kanarese, kar-kona.[69]

[231 The wild Gaur and the Mithan cannot be tamed. The
Gayal, which is wrongly called the Mithan, has no wild
232] ancestor, but is only a cross between the wild bull and the domesticated cow. A clear proof of the mongrel characteristics of the Gayal is this : In districts where the Gaur are numerous and therefore more frequently mate with the domestic cows, the Gayal shows some resemblance to the Gaur,—the massive build with high backbone, etc. Through the constant adding of wild blood this characteristic is preserved, *e.g.* in the upper mountains of Assam. In districts where the Gaur are rare as for instance in the Chin hills, the build of the mongrel is smaller, the ridge at the back disappears, the dewlap grows larger and the horns more like those of the cows. By the fourth generation the maternal component of the ordinary cattle is again quite dominant.[70] In these circumstances one should no longer look for the wild ancestors of the Gayal.

224 There is also a species of animals which the Rong do not
262 kill, *viz.* the wild dog which is reddish in colour. Nor are
825 they allowed to eat the flesh of tame dogs and horses. In this respect they are on par with the Tibetans.

776 There are legends pertaining to other curious creatures which are supposed to live in the thick virgin forests. Bŏn-mān-che is the Nepalese name ; a "Wild man" who is said to be about as large as a great monkey. The Lepcha name for this creature is Sog-pa. Another being is the Bŏn-sacri, the "Wild magician." This creature is believed to kidnap the children of men and lead them away into the depths of the forest, where it instructs them in the arts of magic and makes them so accustomed to the wild forest life that they shun the company of men. The wives of the Bŏn-sacri are the Lidini,
[the "Wild wives." The Rong hunter must be proof against
782] the attacks of all these beings, and so he pays tribute to and
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[69] S. H. Prater, Indian Animals, Bombay, p. 204.

[70] S. H. Prater, op. cit. p. 201 sq.

renders homage to the god of the hunters in order that he 776 [782]
may obtain his protection.

The following sacrifices which are associated with agriculture and the harvest are of a completely different type. We have already had occasion to mention Se-dyu, the goddess 796
of farming. She elects women only and passes on from mother 782
to daughter. The women perform sacrifices in her honour at least twice a year—before the sowing in the springtime and after the harvest in autumn.

The pig and the cock serve as sacrificial victims. For this sacrifice the pig comes first in the order of preference, while in the ceremonies described above we have seen that the bull is given the special preference. The understanding of this factor helps to dispel the apparent contradiction that exists in the opposing claims of some Lepchas who maintain that the pig is the most valued of all animals and others who assert that the cattle are the most valued. It all depends on [231
the type of sacrifice which is being offered at a particular 241]
moment. In the very early days they did not employ cattle to plough with; cattle were harnessed very much later. The sacrifice is performed inside the house in a corner. The man can be present if a woman performs the sacrifice, and the man can even perform the sacrifice when the woman is, for some reason, prevented from performing it.

Apart from these private sacrifices to the god of agriculture, there are also ceremonies performed at festivals and solemnised by all. There are spring and autumn sacrifices. These are associated with the ancestors of Mayal, who as we saw earlier, provided mankind with the first seeds, and instructed them about the manner of cultivation. "The people of Mayal are worshipped exclusively in connection with the crops of rice, millet and maize; on all other occasions they are markedly excluded from the long list of supernaturals who are called on to partake of the sacrifices and give their blessings. Everybody must worship them on two occasions, after the completion of the sowing and at the harvesting of the dry rice; in these houses where there is a Mun or a knowledgeable old man, they are also prayed to in the winter to keep away snow and hail, in the spring to protect young crops and

776 after the sowing of each of their grains, they are offered sakyoufaat
782 to ensure a good harvest.

Only the three crops are connected with the people of
[241 Mayal ; the others come from different supernaturals, barley,
776] wheat, buckwheat, and wet rice come from Kongen-bu, the
god of Kinchenjunga, a Sikkimese deity ; no important ceremonies
are connected with these crops. Cardamum, as has
already been said, comes from Nepal and is under the patronage
of the foreign Elaiji-nyou, who dislikes women, in particular
menstruating women. The people of Mayal are said to share
[841] this dislike and should a menstruating woman visit them there
would be the terrible result that all the people of Mayal would
fall asleep and would not send the migratory birds."[71]

The spring sacrifice is simple. The autumn sacrifice on the contrary is very copious. For this an old experienced man is elected to represent the ancestors of Mayal and he is called Mayal-mu. A woman is selected to represent the Talyeu-mu, the sister earth. When the ceremony cannot be completed on the same day, those taking part in it stay
with each other for the night. There is free intercourse
[786 between the sexes ; however, the comprehensive ban on incestual
833] relations is not broken. This recalls the sexual freedom
171] which is indulged in at the festivals of Spring and Autumn
among many Asiatic peoples and which we observed in the Tibeto-Chinese province Tsing-hai among Chinese, Tujen Tibetans, etc. The representation of ancestors and agricultural spirits by masquerading in their guise is again a well-known custom among Asiatic primitives usually connected with the New Year festivals. Thus the sacrifices of the hunters and of the cultivators stand out in sharp contrast with each other.

The Lepcha, Suliman, gave us informatin about another
family sacrifice to the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing. Anyone
who knows the rites may perform it, whether it be a man or
[262] a woman. The one who performs it must fast for three days
before the ceremony, *i.e.* he must not eat the chief meal of
rice but he can eat the other dishes. During this time he must
[515] take three baths. The bathing place is prepared near the

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[71] Gorer, op. cit. 238 sq.

river. The bath consists of a complete immersion. After 782 796
the last bath he comes into the house to perform the sacrifice. [515]

An altar about 80 centimetres high is erected, and bananas and roots which serve as offerings are placed on it. Flowers are placed on either side. This sacrifice takes place in September. Many people assemble for it, and they later partake of food and millet beer.

One kind of sacrifice consists simply of the action of the man, who before drinking either millet beer or tea, sprinkles some drops with his fingers.[72]

(j) PARALLELS TO THE MYTHS AND THE RITUAL OF THE RONG

The intoxicating drink plays an important part in all the 273
sacrifices offered by the Rong. One kind is Chi, a brew of 796
millet. The second is Dyö, an alcoholic drink, which is made not of millet but of different components. In all the sacrificial texts and rites a special importance is attached to this stimulant. As the text indicates, there is an individual deity
personifying the intoxicating drink, *viz.* Dön-dyö-chi-log, who [776]
is also represented among the Tormas and is rendered the same homage as the Supreme God and his family. This
intoxicating drink according to the tradition of the Rong is 773
of heavenly origin. Tradition has it that at the very outset 273
the ferment used in the manufacture of the intoxicant was 796
brought to mankind from the other side of the world in a cunning manner by a special messenger. Immortality, too, is linked up with this drink. Birds have a special part to play in connection with both these drinks. The quail is considered to have performed the Chi sacrifice after the deluge. Two birds are said to have fetched the drink of immortality from the land of the gods. Then a two-fold effect which causes merriment is described. When the snakes drank Chi, they went mad. To quote Stocks, "You have stolen my ferment, if you only know how to use it, you would be able to offer the 'chi' to the Rum, but now you will find that it always excites you, it will cause you all to quarrel, it may even perhaps kill you.

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[72] Cfr. op. cit. p. 246.

273 796 778 But the wasp started to make 'chi' as he brought the ferment back, and all the Rum came but none dared taste it, as they did not know what would happen to the first one who drank.

Then the pa-vin-bu volunteered to try it first (and he is the snake who springs from trees). As soon as he had drunk a little, he became mad, and commenced to fly, and some of his friends went to look after him. They found however that he was not dying, and another snake—one that is black, the pa-mol-bu, drank and also became mad. He went into a cave and some of his friends went in to look after him but they found he was only snoring.

Then a third snake—one that is poisonous, the pa-hlyok-bu, volunteered. He drank the 'chi' and went away vomiting, and ever since that day he is more poisonous.

Then a fourth offered to taste it—the horned one that has a red head and a black body (tik). She had some and only ran away drunken.

After that there came another snake—the pa-zyob-bu, who only lives in the hills—and when he had gone everyone thought they might try as the poison had by now all gone."[78]

796 273 For the snakes or demons, this drink has deleterious effects ; for the gods however it is a refreshing drink. Through the Chi sacrifice, *i.e.* through the enjoyment of the intoxicating drink, they become softened and quiet. To cite an instance: the god in his rage made the flood come down; then softened through the sacrifice of Chi, he let the waters abate. In the traditions of the Rong we do not come across evidences of a god who becomes exhilarated through drinking of the love-potion, as is the case with Indra on drinking Soma.

[791] The magicians work themselves into a frenzy by partaking of Chi, in order to reach a state of ecstasy. The Chi sacrifice is most closely connected with the bull, and is performed on the head of the animal. The sacrificial vessel containing the drink must always be decorated with three little pats of butter.

The Chi sacrifice has an entirely original and individual character and is closely bound up with the life and the ritual of the Rong. It belongs therefore to their old ancestral estate, and is not borrowed from other peoples. 273 796

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[78] Stocks, op. cit. p. 353.

In the Soma-Haoma sacrifices of the Indians and the Iranians, we find striking parallels. "The conception of a stimulating drink of the gods appears to go back to the Indo-European times. The drink which manifests secret, ecstatic, and exciting power to men, must be an essence of the gods, and a special possession of the gods... The dwelling place of this drink of the gods appears to have been heaven according to Indo-European beliefs.... From its heavenly storage place, the bird of the god, or the god himself in the guise of a bird, fetched or stole it from the jealously watching demons; the eagle of Indra; the nectar carrying eagle of Zeus; Odin who as an eagle carried away mead.... Finally it may perhaps be accepted, that the conception of godlike immortality is already connected at the time of the Indo-Europeans with the drink of the gods (Amrta, Ambrosia). As human life is preserved by taking meat and drink and specially death is warded off for a time, at least by medicine, so must the godly existence also depend on the partaking of a drink whose essence is immortality."[74] [171]

The sacrifice as the nourishment of the gods is known to the Rong. "Then Tashey-takbo-thing wished to make his first sacrifice to the Rum and called the ngo and the ngo-yong.... 796 782 773

At the offering time the hands and feet of the Tashey-takbo-hing quarrelled with his belly saying, 'We work very hard the whole time, but you, the belly, do nothing.' And the belly replying said, 'Very well then, as you believe that, for two or three days I shall really do nothing. I will rest and shall not eat anything.'

Then the hands became so weak they could do nothing, and were soon unable to move. And the belly said, 'If you find me something to eat, you will find you regain strength and vigour.' And as he ate a little the hands and feet regained strength, and they knew they were defeated. So they planted sugar-cane (mut pa-mam), pine-apples (bor-pot) and all kinds of fruit which grew abundantly.

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[74] H. Oldenberg, Die Religion des Veda, Stuttgart-Berlin 1917, p. 160 sq.

796 And Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits
782 with many fish from the river and sacrificed them. This was
[773] the commencement of all offering."[75]

Thus among the Rong, as among the Indo-Iranians the
[776 stimulating drink, finally becomes a deity. "Further, the
273] sacrificial drink filled with daemonic strength,—like the sacrificial fire—has become a mighty god."[76]

But Soma-Haoma is however most intimately bound up with cattle. "Soma is dressed in the cow robe—the admixture of milk in it."[76a] We noticed, among the Rong, the butter decoration on the bowl of Chi.

Significant also is the rite by which the Lepchas place the
796 offering of Chi on the forehead of the bull, and so bind more
782 closely together the cult of the stimulant with cattle. All
171 the same both cults remain autonomous and independent. This is of special value as it throws more light on the old Indo-Iranian ritual and sacrifices. Some scholars today think it is possible to connect the following:

"The cult of the killing of the Soma in the form of little plant shoots in the Vedic sacrifice and the myth of the killing of the Haoma bull in the mythology of Mithra have a broad ethnological connection, and are the Aryan shaping of an ancient prehistorical mythology and cult....Now if Zarathustra repeatedly declaims with passion and holy anger against the slaughtering of bulls it is not, as has been maintained, for agricultural and utilitarian reasons, but because this ritual act formed the essential constituent part of the old religion. Now within the Soma sacrifice, the highest and most solemn sacrifice of the old Indians, it is clear that the offering of a gift to the gods was not the most essential thing, but the renewal of the original sacrifice of the gods. As the gods in heaven prepare the Soma rain for the good of the world, so does man in the holy ceremony prepare the drink of immortality which stands for rain as the source of life, in order to share in the blessing of the godlike original sacrifice and to make sure of it for himself. And for all the slaughtering of beasts and men, which

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[75] Stocks, op. cit. p. 366.
[76] H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 172.
[76a] op. cit. p. 178.

Jensen has reported, it is likewise evident, that they occurred 796
as a repetition of that first killing, from which new life was 782
engendered. 771

Thus it is clear then, that the slaughtering of cattle which Zarathustra again and again condemned, was the imitating and repeating of the indeed cruel, but—blessed killing of the original bull.

And in the closest connection with this, Zarathustra condemned in the same place the Haoma sacrifice, although, it is true he does not mention the name Haoma, but uses instead, an old unmistakable title of the Haoma.

This simultaneous mentioning of the Haoma endorses my opinion that with the words, 'the bull must be killed,' the sacrifice of the bull in the Mitra cult and its cosmic meaning are alluded to.'' This bull is said to be identical with Haoma.[77]

Very correctly does Lommel lay emphasis on the drawing of ethnological and prehistorical parallels for the explanation of the ritual. Our case is specially instructive for such an interpretation. The beliefs of the Rong and their rites prove beyond the shadow of doubt that the cult of the intoxicating drink and the cult of the bull are not identical, but are two altogether independent cults, and moreover that they are not the imitation of the original offering of the deity itself. Among the oldest ethnological tribes this mystification is not to be found; but it is certainly so among the younger peoples especially among those with the peculiar mystery-religion. Others believe that the intoxicating Haoma has been supplanted by the milk-haoma which links with an old milk-mystery. The Mithra religion is Apolonic, sober, formalistic; the Iranian Gatha-religion on the contrary, is Dionysiac, and is familiar with the Haoma delirium, with ecstacies, trances, and the wandering of souls in a state of trance.

Among the Indo-Iranians the Soma-Haoma sacrifice was performed in spring time for all the gods.[78] We have pointed out that exactly the same thing happens in the case of the Rong. The Bong-thing and the Mun, by partaking of

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[77] H. Lommel, Mithra und das Stieropfer, in Paideum, Bd. III, H. 6/7, Juni 1949, p. 216 sq., p. 212.

[78] H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 440 sq.

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171 Chi, rouse themselves into a state of ecstasy, and then began their dances and their soul-wanderings in a state of ecstasy.

273 A brief description of the manner in which the Rong prepare the intoxicating drink would not be out of place here. Chi is obtained from the small millet. The well-ripened grains are dried in the sun for three days, and then cooked in an earthenware pot which is covered over with a bamboo mat. A larger barrel is inverted over this. After the cooking, the ferment is added, and the fermentation begins. The fermented liquor is left in the sun for several days so that the alcoholic content may become stronger. Finally the grains are squeezed out and the chi-brew is thus obtained. The fermenting grains are then put into a bamboo barrel and warm water is poured over them. This water becomes slightly alcoholic and is sucked in through a little bamboo tube. The method of drinking beer through a little bamboo tube, in order to avoid the impure sediment, is a very old custom indeed, and had been practised by the Hitties. It is a universal practice among the Himalayan peoples.

The other type of alcoholic beverage, Dyō, is made from medicinal roots, herbs, or other fermentable plants. The preparation would depend on the material used in each case. The roots are soaked in warm water, the fermenting agent is added and the whole concoction allowed to ferment. After a few days the molasses is squeezed out. It seems that the preparation of the Soma was similar, but the secret of the extraction has been lost.

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171 The home of the Soma plants is supposedly the high rocky mountains. "Soma on the rocks"[79]; the eagle robs Soma from the rocks.[80] It is "an inhabitant of the mountains," a "growth of the mountain world."[81] In one place the name for such a mountain is said to be Mujevat.[82] According to the Mahabharata (XIV) this was a mountain to the rear of the Himalayas. The plant was also a medicine and was called "Medicine for the sick."[83] The medicinal effect was so

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[79] Rigveda V, 85, 2.
[80] op. cit. I, 93, 6.
[81] X, 63, 4; XV, 9, 95, 4.
[82] X, 34. 1.
[83] Rigveda VIII, 72, 17.

potent that it even brought about immortality.[84] The motif 273
of "Medicine of Immortality" which is widely circulated 171
through the whole of Asia is an effective argument in this case. According to this, Soma was a kind of medicinal plant which grew in the highest mountains.

In those early days, no Indo-Aryans lived in this mountain world. It is more probable that from the very early time they obtained medicinal roots and herbs from the inhabitants of the mountains. In the Atharvaveda it is said, "The young maid of the Kirati race, a young damsel, digs the drug ; digs it with shovels wrought of gold on the high ridges of the hills."[85] The Kirati however are a people related to the Tibetans, as we shall see later on, and their name is identical with the Rai as we have mentioned above. The expression "kirata-tikta" occurs in Sanskrit and means "A very bitter medicinal plant." The name is preserved in the Prakrit as Cilaa-itta or Ciraa-itta ; in Old-Bengal as Cirayita and in New-Bengal as Cirata or Cireta. It certainly means "Medicine of the Kirata."[86] The Soma plant and its juice were equally bitter. It is reported that the Kirati provided the Aryans with Soma plants. If they grew in the high Himalayan mountains there was certainly no other way of obtaining the plants except through the natives who had a knowledge of medicinal herbs.

It is naturally impossible to produce a commonly used popular drink from a rare plant which had to be transported from a great distance. Oldenberg raises the same question from an altogether different point of view, "Has Soma ever been a favourite drink in the daily life of the Aryans? I doubt it...In the Veda, Soma certainly was not a favourite drink, and it seems to me that the Avestic sources also teach this. The real intoxicating drink in the ordinary life of the ancient Indian peoples was sura...

Sura was put to sacred use at the ceremonies of the Sautramani as also of the Vajaya."[87] Even the Soma sacrifices were not numerous, or greater quantities of Soma plants would

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[84] op. cit. I, 91, 6 ; VIII, 48, 3 ; IX, 113, 8.

[85] S. K. Chatterji, Kirata-Jana-Krti, Journal R. A. S. B. Vol. XVI, 1950. No. 2. p. 162.

[86] op. cit. p. 163.

[87] H. Oldenberg, op. cit, p. 366.

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have been used. "Only for a few, the celebrations of the Soma sacrifice could have been possible; where it was celebrated it could only have had for the masses of the people at most, the character of an incomprehensible play which they watched; the functions leaving the onlookers unmoved."[88] A drink so easily obtained and in general use, would not have so easily been linked with the "Drink of Immortality."

The Soma plants were ground down according to primitive methods on a stone plate by means of a stone, and later crushed in a stone mortar.[89] Then the juice was squeezed out. This juice was of a brownish, reddish, or greeny-yellowish colour. To purify this juice it was run through a strainer made of sheep's wool.[90] The Iranians used a strainer made of hair from the holy white bull. During the process three priests chant a monotonous hymn. The juice was very frequently mixed with water, milk or sour milk.[91]

It was poured back and forth into different barrels. All the manipulations would certainly cause the fermentation of the juice, as it did have an intoxicating effect.[92]

All this goes to show that Soma was quite a rare intoxicating drink. The ordinary intoxicant of the ancient Indians was Sura, which was also used for the purpose of the sacrifice. Here, too, we have an exact parallel with the Lepchas;—millet beer, Chi, is the ordinary stimulant which is generally used for the sacrificial purpose as it is easily obtained. Dyō is made from medicinal roots and is of a brownish colour. The alcohol content is high like some of our modern liqueurs. Because of the rarity of the roots, Dyō is not often manufactured and is less frequently used in sacrifices. Soma must have been extracted from some similar medicinal root. The Himalayan peoples gave it to the Aryans and handed over to them the recipe for making it.

This of course does not prove that the sacrifice of the intoxicating drink was introduced by the Aryans in this manner.

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[88] op. cit. p. 440 sq.
[89] Rigveda IX, 67, 19, 107, 10; I, 28, 1-3.
[90] Rigveda IX. 69. 9.
[91] Rigveda VII. 3, 6.
[92] Cfr. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 457 sq., S. K. Godivala, Indo-Iranian Religion, Bombay, 1925, p. 6. sq.

"The idea of the stimulating drink of the gods appears to 273
go back to Indo-European times."[93] There it was the old 171
honey mead. Instead of mead the Aryans used Soma when they settled in India which they came to know through the Himalayan peoples, among whom intoxicating drinks had a similar significance.

The present day customs and practices of the Lepchas are a commentary on the old customs. Among all the Southern Himalayan peoples the Lepchas, as far as we could see, were the only ones who have knowledge of the plant and know the art of making the intoxicating drink from it. The Tibetans call the drink of immortality "dud-rtzi"; it is nectar or ambrosia. Literally it means the devil's drink. They use the name ho-ma by which they mean a butter-burnt-offering; ho-ma-byed-pa means, usually, to offer. The Tibetans say "ho-ma" which is related to the Iranian "haoma" and not to the Sanskrit "soma"; moreover the expression "devil's juice" is a defamatory appellation. Exactly the same did Zarathustra with the Haoma drinking bout. These two facts seem to indicate that the Tibetans have in this, as in many other ways, imbibed the Iranian heritage.

The sagas of the Great Flood offer us another parallel. 773
We can differentiate two main motifs; *a*) the cause of the flood, *viz*. the damming of the waters by the snake king, and *b*) the freeing of the waters when the demon was smashed to pieces and the saving of the human couple.

The Rong relate the following: "Then Paril-bu, who was the Serpent-king, dammed the rivers by lying in them, and they overflowed and rose to a great height and reached the sky... Tashey-thing sent a hero down into the world called the Yong-li-pone to kill the serpent who was blocking the rivers. The hero cut the serpent in pieces, thus making the waters run down the plains."[94]

Veda (I·32) describes how Vrtra, the snake demon, 773
closed the passage of the waters so that they could not flow 171
away. Indra came to battle, overwhelmed the snake-demon

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[93] H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 169.

[94] Stocks, op. cit. p. 358.

773 and cut it to pieces. Then he cleared the path for the waters
171 so that they could flow freely into the sea.[96]

Indra-Vrtra corresponds to the Iranian Tishtar-Apaosha. After the fight between them both had raged with unabated fury for three days, he appeared weary and about to give in. Whereupon he cried, "If men would perform sacrifices, I still could win." They therefore offered the Haoma sacrifice because of which the hero gained strength and conquered the demon. Indra had also obtained superb strength through the drinking of Soma. In the Rong myths the stimulant Chi had to be offered to God in order that he might be passified and let the floods abate. As the serpent is again linked in another way with the flood, the snake king as leader of the river Rung-nyo and the subsequent flood;—we do not believe that the Rong have, in this case, taken over Vedic Hindu myths, but have handed down, independently, their own legends, which are very slightly influenced by modern Hinduism.

The second motif is the saving of a pair or of a few people, who either saved themselves by taking refuge on a mountain-top or in a vessel. We have acquainted ourselves earlier with the Rong legend (page 40 sq.). In Atharvaveda (19·39·8) this event is recorded as having occurred in the Himalayas, "There was the arrival of the vessel ; there was the peak of the Himalayas ; there was immortality in sight ; there grows the Kushta grass." Shatapatha Brahmana (1·8·1/10) describes how Manu was saved in a ship. According to the Vendidad of the Iranians, Jamshed (Yima) was locked up in a "vara" by Ahura-Mazda, the Supreme God, in order that he might be saved from the great flood.

As the myths of the flood occur among so many Asiatic peoples (in the Near, Middle and Far East) there is no conclusive parallel about the saving of mankind as described in the myths of the Rong and Indo-Iranians. These legends could be drawn from several sources.

782 In the cult of the Rong, the sacrificing of bulls plays an outstanding part. For both, the living (during illness) and for the dead (in funeral ceremonies), the bulls must lose their

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96. Cfr. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 133 sq.

lives. The same is true of the different important sacrifices 782
offered in the course of the year.

On the contrary one of the traditions has it that the 773
oldest material for offerings were Chi, the intoxicating drink, dried fish, and small birds. According to other traditions the number of objects is somewhat increased. "Every year we give fish (ngo), game (fo), rice-chi (mor-chi), beaten rice (ta-fa) and ginger (hing.) These are put on banana leaves and are offered at Shara near the Tulung monastery."[96] Another legend is as follows: "Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits with many fish from the rivers and sacrificed them. This was the commencement of all offerings."[97] This gives us an insight into the sacrificial practices of a people who live on game and the spoils of the chase, who offer the spoils and the collected eatable plants and fruits. The god of the hunt, Pong-rum, commanded the hunters to perform sacrifices to him.[98]

Completely different are the sacrifices of cattle, pigs and 796
goats which are most closely linked up with the Mun-Bong- 782
thing religion, as we have already seen from the reports of 171
these priests.[99] But as these sacrifices are a very old custom 231
of the Rong, it is obvious that the cattle offerings are old too. The cattle are, indeed, the Asiatic mountain Zebu, which have small horns and a rudimentary hump. In these days the Lepchas practise various methods of killing the victims. "Cattle are usually killed with a bow and arrow, shooting from very near, sometimes they are stoned or killed with a pointed knife. Pigs and goats are killed with a pointed knife if there is one, otherwise with a piece of sharpened bamboo."[100] The cattle are killed at the same time by the blow of an axe in the nape of the neck.

The sacrificing of cattle plays an important part in the 796
ritual of many Asiatic mountain people. The Northern 782
Sangtam tribe in Assam are familiar with such sacrifices 171
during which beer is an important stimulant. Among the

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96. Stocks, op. cit. p. 368.
97. op. cit. p. 356.
98. Cfr. above p. 77.
99. Cfr. p. 58 sq.
100. Gorer, op. cit. p. 105.

796 Lakher, the Mithan must be shot with the bow and arrow.
782 These sacrifices are common among the different Naga
171 tribes.[101] Lepchas, who during the war came to these
parts of the country, state that the practices of these people are in many ways similar to and in harmony with their own practices.

We find the sacrificing of bulls common to the Thai, the Lolo, the Na-chi and the Tibetans. Cattle and pigs were of primary importance among the animal offerings of ancient China. In Iran, Zarathustra waged fanatical warfare against the cattle killers. In the "Bull Gatha" (29) the soul of the bull complains to the gods that cattle are handed over to the murderous lust of men and prays for help and protection. Ahura-Mazda calls on Zarathustra to provide some protection for the cattle. At the time when the Aryans in India still preserved their nomadic tedencies, they offered bull sacrifices. Aitareya Brahmana (11·1·8) says that men at first had the horse as the principal sacrificial animal. Later, cattle took the place of the horse ; the sheep replaced the cow, and in the end cats replaced the sheep. Ultimately, however, plant offerings totally ousted the animal offerings. This is however a subsequent construction. The sacrifices of cattle occur still in modern India and the Brahmins who perform the sacrifice in South India must also eat the flesh that has been offered, and by doing so, they do not violate the rules of the caste.

Already in the Mohenjodaro culture the pictures of bulls are linked with the name of the deity Kusi, Ikusi; they are of the greatest significance and could only originate from the cult motifs. Thus the Rong sacrifices of the bull contribute greatly to the significance which the bull-cult has for mankind.

Very interesting parallels occur between the hunting rites and sacrifices of the Lepchas on the one hand, and the primitive Indian tribes and North-East Asiatic peoples on
the other. Just as the Rong believe that their hunt-god,
[779] Pong-rum, incarnates himself in the form of bears, the

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[101] C. R. Stoner, The Feasts of Merit among the Northern Sangtam Tribes of Assam, Anthropos, Freiburg, 1950, Vol. XLV p. 1 sq.

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Jakuts, the Sojots, Tungus, etc., regard the bears as deities.[102] 171
These people have almost developed a pronounced bear cult. [776]

This certainly is not the case with the Rong; but even they hold the bear in high esteem and consider it to be the most [825] intelligent and clever of all the wild animals, nay, with traits that bear has a resemblance to human beings. The bear is taboo among some Indian tribes.

The women-folk of these tribes, like the Lepcha women, are strictly excluded from all contact with the game that has been captured for the sacrifice. "The relationship of woman to game is especially delicate among all Siberian peoples. Especially during menstruation or pregnancy, she may easily ruin the luck when men go on a hunt. Further, in her heedlessness she can cause the animals to shy off to another district."[103] When the game is being conveyed into the house, a meeting with women must be avoided at all costs. Some tribes do not even permit the game to be taken in through the door because women pass in and out of it. The game is brought in through a window or some other aperture.[104] It is customary among the Golden, as also among the Irulas, not to permit a woman to look at the head of the bear, just as the Rong conceal the head of the game from the eyes of woman. Thus there occur among the hunting people who are now so widely scattered, very great similarities in the hunting rites and usages. The same can be said of their arts of magic.

This similarity is markedly evident in the case of the 796
Mun and Bong-thing of the Rong and the Siberian Shamans. 782
The only difference is, as we have already pointed out, that 171
the Rong do not employ the individual Shaman instruments 793
such as the Shaman drums and the magic daggers. The Lepchas have certainly preserved the older form. The vocational calling of the Siberian Shamans and the Rong-Mun is closely allied. Both men and women are elected. "Werbitskij mentions in his decription of Shamanism in the Altai district, that the Shaman gift is at the same time an

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[102] U. Harva, Die religiösen Vorstellungen der altaiischen Völker, Helsinki 1938, p. 407 sq.

[103] U. Harva, op. cit. p. 412.

[104] op. cit. p. 414 sq.

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782 illness which is hereditary in the family. Numerous examples
771 prove that the Shaman disposition does in fact appear as a
793 kind of illness."[105]

Our own studies have brought to light the existence of similar dispositions among the Rong. In both places there is the same conception of the spirits of Shaman. These spirits sometimes take the form of animals, *e.g.*, that of a bull. "His bull-form walks abroad, is also said by the forest Juraks, when the soul of a Shaman has departed to another world."[106] They also bring the deceased into the kingdom of the dead.[107] All these facts run a close parallel to our findings among the Rong and other primitive hunter tribes in India.

Further similarities are found in the mode of consecration and instruction. The Shaman costume however is fundamentally different. The Rong have no special costume, while among the different Siberian peoples, a wide variety of customs are worn.

(*k*) THE SOCIAL CLASSES OF THE RONG.

173 According to the general tradition existent among the
Rong, they claim to have been originally a race of hunters,
and that in the very early times before the Tibetans, the
Bhutanese and the Nepalese had infiltrated into their country,
they lived as the free rulers of the immense forests which were
824 their home. The Lepchas have a clear knowledge of the
825 animals, the birds, the plants, the fruits and the roots, and
can tell which are poisonous and which are edible. Even
222 today the Lepcha will not starve if the harvest fails, for he will
261 procure as his sustenance the edible leaves, fruits and roots
from the forest. One such root is the dayout-buck. After
being dug up it is broken into small pieces and soaked in water
[272] for three days to remove the poison and clear off the lye. A
ferment is then added and a kind of beer produced. Another
252 root is the dog-bo or bok-yik. It is cut up, the lye cleared,
262 and then it is cooked and crushed. The broth is eaten like
rice. This is of a pale violet colour.

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105. op. cit. p. 462.
106. op. cit. p. 478.
107. op. cit. p. 478.

Besides the knowledge of edible objects the Rong are 278
well acquainted with poisons. They know the secret of a [411]
deadly poison for making poisoned arrows. A fairly thick layer is smeared on the lower half of the arrow head but none whatsoever on the point. A very slight wound is enough to kill any animal. The great advantage of this poison is that it does not enter the blood stream but acts locally so that the entire flesh is not poisoned. The injured portion has necessarily to be cut away. The poison consists of a very complicated mixture of ingredients which points to the long experience the Lepchas have in its manufacture. The first ingredient,
"Father of the poison" called ning-dyüd, is obtained from [439]
Tibet. The theory is that a bird scrapes out of the earth a peculiar root, eats part of it and gains immense strength. The Tibetans collect the remainder of the root and trade with the Lepchas who prepare the poison. Death quickly ensues if even the tiniest fragment of the root is consumed. Another ingredient, bar-lang, is a root, which, in the language of the Rong, is called rog-log. The third ingredient is obtained from gön-chong. Neither of the roots is found in the high mountains but has to be procured from the neighbourhood of the plains. Yet another root is called se-red in Lepcha, and ga-gra in Nepalese. In addition there is the poison extracted from the root of a shrub which bears a yellow flower, and whose name the hunter could no longer remember. Gön-liong-rik serves as the "conduct" for these poisons. So potent is the effect of this poison that a person is liable to lose his life even if he inhales the odour it gives off for too long a period. Without the admixture of the poison from Tibet, the other poisons cannot be localised and the entire flesh of the animal would be rendered unedible. Thus we see that the poison for arrows is very complicated and the process of pre-
paration is known only to the Rong. The other people fear [248]
them because of this knowledge of poisons.

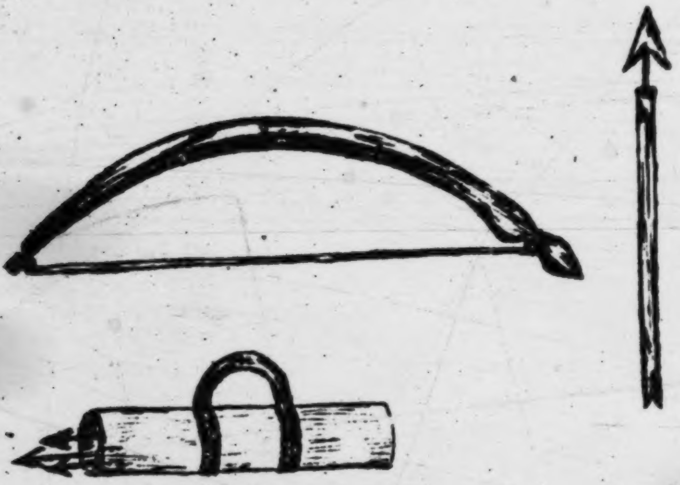
The fruit of the above-mentioned rog-log is called rog-log-pot, and only a very few people are in a position to procure it. A strong poison is made from it. A poison for the killing
of fish is called bü-rü. This is obtained from the leaves of the [226]
gol-gung tree by rubbing them down in a mortar. The poison, if thrown into a tank, kills all the fish but in no way makes them inedible.

666 224 them inedible. Some of the Rong are passionate hunters and spend months away from home on their expeditions. They send the game to their families through others. These [776] hunters venerate certain deities, Gom-shi-rum and Gom-yu-rum, who inspire them with this passion for hunting. The [225] Rong hunter is intimately acquainted with the ways of the wild ; he knows every track, and can judge the time when the animal passed that way. He sets out in their tracks and pursues them tirelessly until he sights his quarry. Some of these hunters have won legendary fame. They told us of the father of A-chi Bong-thing, that he fearlessly pursued tigers and elephants. The very look in his eyes was so hypnotic that the animals, filled with frenzied fear, fled away from his glance as much as from his arrow.

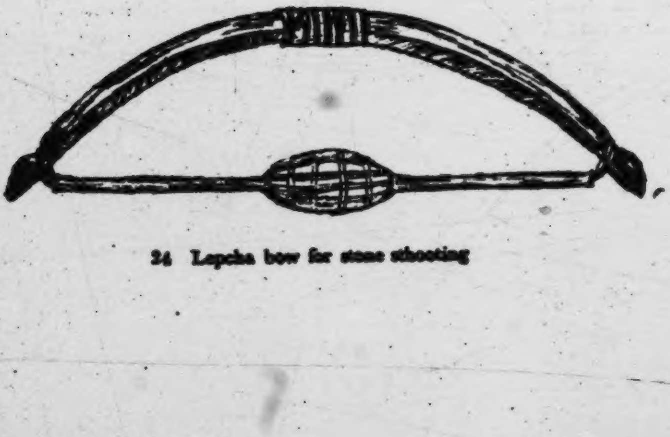
411 The Lepcha makes his bow from the Ma-li-lang bamboo. The larger bows are about 1 and ¾ meter long, and the shorter ones about 1 and ½ meter. The section of the bow shaft is 1/3 of a circle. The flat side of the shaft is inwards and the concave side outward. One end of the bow consists of a double knob separated by a notch which holds the string fastening. The other end has a notched pin in which the string can be easily fixed or removed. The string is made from Dzu-ya bamboo. At the ends are little ridges round which hemp threads are bound in order to fasten the string to the ends of the bow.

The arrow, which is about 50 cms. in length, is made from Po-rang bamboo. At the end is a notch which fits into the string. At the top of the shaft a fish tailed arrow head is let in. The quiver is made from the Bug-wood which grows in the plains. A bamboo loop fastened in the middle facilitates the carrying of the quiver. Another type of bow is used for shooting birds. It is smaller and the construction is slightly different. The bow shaft has a ridge of bamboo in the middle of the inner section of the shaft. The string is stretched into a little network in the middle which holds the pellets. The birds are shot with little taws of clay. (Fig. 22-24).

[text continues on p. 100]



23 Lepcha bow, arrow, quiver



24 Lepcha bow for stone shooting

411 Another weapon commonly used by the Rong is the knife Bakob. It has a straight blade and a gradually narrowing wooden hilt.

The Rong tribesman, in striking contrast to the other peoples, always carries his knife on his right hip while the
[412] others carry the Nepalese Kukuri on the left hip. The knife is the instrument most commonly used by the Lepchas. It serves to cut down trees, to divide the game and for countless other purposes.

224 That, in brief, is the equipment of the Lepcha hunters and their temperament. We have already seen how all this is linked with religion, *viz.* by the performance of sacrifices and the description of the hunt-deities. The Rong, or at least a part
[174] of them, have been, without doubt, originally, purely hunters. This belief is confirmed by Gorer, "According to Kahlyeu, (and the tradition is supported by others) until the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Lepcha were entirely nomadic, only building temporary huts and travelling about the forests, living on such animals they could kill, and wild plants of which the Lepcha have considerable knowledge, for they know the edible (but not, as European tradition believes, the medicinal) properties of nearly every plant and tree. Iron for knives, Kahlyeu says, was introduced in the time of his father's grandfather, that is to say, the first half of the eighteenth century. About a generation later the Lepcha started living in permanent houses and were able to hold or increase their stock
[423] of domestic animals. Private property in the land must have developed somewhat later."[108]

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773 Besides being hunters the Rong are also farmers. According to their legends they obtained their first seeds of dry rice, millet, maize and gurkins from their ancestral spirits in Mayal. They came as hunters to the land of their ancestors and were asked whether they possessed any grains for food. As they replied in the negative, they were given grain with instruction about its cultivation. At first, rice was used only for sacrificial purposes. They could only test whether the rice was ready by biting it with their teeth, and when they did so they found that the rice was sweet, and henceforward they began to eat rice as a food.

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[108] Gorer, op. cit. p. 69 sq.

rice as a food. The fact that the offering of sacrifices to the 241
deities concerned with farming was preponderantly a woman's
concern, leads us to conclude that farming was originally [174]
the work of the women. In the olden days the fields were
burnt out in order to prepare them for the plantation. Part
of the forest was burnt, cleaned up, and the cultivation of grain
would be carried on for one or two years, after which
the tribesmen would move away to another area. This
is known as shifting cultivation. Today, the burning of fields
is controlled by government, lest too much damage be done [636]
to the forests. The permanent field system is the common
practice today. (Fig. 25-27)

The Rong originally dug up their fields with the use of
the hoe, and they did not use the plough. They have taken [177]
over the plough only recently from the Indians and the Nepalese.
The Lepcha's knowledge of farming was very elementary
and they could by no means compete with the Indian
and Nepalese farmers. There was a reason behind this. The
Lepchas were not totally dependent for their existence on [222
farming, for the collection of roots and plants, and hunting, 224]
offered them rich sources of nourishment. A little cattle-
breeding goes hand in hand with farming. They keep a 231
few cattle and goats ; sheep are kept very seldom, and at the
most one or two pigs. The cattle are the mountain Zebu.
The humps of these animals are feebly developed, but for the
rest they are strong animals. The Zebu are generally of a
black colour. The goats are of a poor variety and have no
special breed. The pig, which is different in shape from the
black Chinese pig, has as its forbear the black Himalayan
boar. The stomach of the pig does not hang down low ; it
has small erect ears, a strong mane of bristles, and a long and
pointed head. A Lepcha who is well off keeps about eight to [311]
ten cattle, and among these are two pairs of oxen for cultivation.
The other animals are milk cows and calves. The milk [234
provided by these animals is used mainly for tea ; but occasionally 252]
butter is made from it. The number of goats reared
is also not very large—ranging from ten to fifteen among the
richer folk. The cattle and goats are driven to the grassy [312]
slopes for grazing throughout the day and in the evening they
return to their stalls. (Fig. 28)

231 These stalls for the cattle consist of a protecting roof
343 supported on a bamboo frame. On the sloping side there is a little platform about ½ a meter high, which is used as a rack and is enclosed with bamboo posts. Here the fodder is piled,—grass and the branches and leaves of certain trees and shrubs. Little huts are used as stalls for the goats. These are raised about one meter high on bamboo posts. A bamboo gangway over which the goats cross into the hut, leads to the door. For the poultry, there is a little hut raised on bamboo posts about two meters above the ground. The poultry get into the hut by walking over a post with notches cut into it. In this manner the goats and poultry are protected against the wild animals. Every farm has a few dogs of a wretched paria breed. Horses and donkeys are rare.

342 The house of the Rong tribesman differs from that of the Nepalese, Bhutanese and Tibetans. It is so built on the slope, that the back wall rests against a stone foundation. A little path runs between the rear wall and the mountain slope, and this leads to the door either directly or through a little stone stairway. In front of the wall in the direction of the slope, a terrace is levelled out and on this there are two or three rows of columns made of square-cut tree trunks which support a balcony of planks. Over this balcony are walls made of pannels which are either filled in with wooden boards or with bamboo slats which are smeared with a layer of mud. A few openings are left in the walls which serve as windows and these are closed with the aid of sliding boards. The construction of the roof is peculiar. It consists of three sections; one of these is the middle ridge roof and two gable roofs. While the ground plan of the house is square, the roof is oval. It is covered with a special variety of grass held in place with bamboo slats. On the outer side a gallery runs either all around the four walls or around one wall only. (Fig. 29-32).

353 The inside of the square house is divided into several
354 parts. The biggest room is the fireplace. The planks of the floor along the back wall are covered with a thick layer of clay and are set in an edging of clay. In the centre there are three stones on which the kettles are placed. In larger families there are two fire-

places made of five stones. The third stone in the middle 353
is common to both and is long enough to support a kettle on 354
each of its outer extremities. Since the stones are placed
with a view to holding larger kettles little iron tripods with [415]
rings are placed between the stones so as to permit the use of
little kettles. Wood is used for fuel. About 1 and ½ meter [372]
above the fire a bamboo framework shelf is suspended for 353
holding the kitchen utensils, fuel and other articles. The
fireplace stretches across the entire width of the house, as it
is the chief work-room, dining-room and, at night, the dormitory.
In addition to this there are other little rooms shut
off by wooden partitions. Some of these have a roof made
of bamboo slats. All types of belongings are stored up over
this ceiling which can be approached by the help of a tree
trunk notched at intervals to serve as stairs. Occasionally
one finds an additional partition which serves as an altar on [778]
which sacrifices are offered. This is, very likely, a borrowing
from Buddhism.

The pig sties are sometimes located under the house, 231
sometimes at the side. Near the house are situated the stables 343
for cattle and goats and the poultry cages, together with other
store houses. The entire settlement in some cases is completely [417]
enclosed with a bamboo fence.

Individual farmhouses are as a rule all by themselves. 361
But there are also settlements which comprise of two, three or 342
four houses. This kind of dwelling, a kind of building on piles,
is characteristic of the Rong, but has its parallels in South-East
Asia and South China.

The ancient costume of the Rong consists of two coarse 291
striped widths of cloth which are held in place over the
shoulders by means of a clasp, and about the loins with the
aid of a cloth girdle. It reaches up to the knees. Both men
and women wear trousers which come below the knees. Sometimes
the men wear a short shirt, while the women wear a
bodice. This was the ancient costume and the material for
this was woven by the Lepchas themselves. Today the
practice of weaving has almost died out. The Lepchas [286]
purchase ready-made materials. In place of the old style
the women have taken over the Tibetan style in an ever increasing [177]
degree ; the long dress without sleeves (the Tibetan

291 dress is with sleeves) held with a girdle, and a jacket over it. [177] The head gear consists of a cloth worn in the manner of the Nepalese women. The old head-dress for the men was a thimble-shaped hat woven from bamboo; see book-cover. (Fig. 33-36).

301 The Rong folk wear rings, bracelets, and necklaces as ornaments. But one will never come across a case of a Rong wearing any ornamentation to the nose, the feet and the toes. 412 The most common implement used by the women is the sickle. A bent sickle hook-shaped at the upper end is called bahur in the Lepcha tongue, and kurpa in Nepalese. It is used for cutting wood and the branches of trees. Another kind of sickle, in the shape of a half moon, is called angsu (sikāl in Nepalese) and is used to mow grass and weeds. The third type has a toothed edge, and is used as a kind of saw. It is called angsu in Lepcha and ancher in Nepalese. A girl is given her sickle [868] at the age of seven or eight, and the boy his knife, so that from a very early age they may be able to practise the use of the most universal of instruments. Usually it is carried [482] in the belt at the back. (Fig. 37-44)

241 412 The most important of the implements used for farming is the wide shovel-like hoe, and it is used for loosening the earth and clearing it of weeds. There are in addition two or three pronged hoes used for loosening the earth and relieving it of weeds.

[177] The plough has been taken over from the Nepalese. It consists of a horn shaped piece of wood, which is tipped by the iron ploughshare. The drawing beam goes up from the centre and above is the plough handle with a handle to steer with. The beam is fixed to the yoke which is drawn by two oxen.

205 174 The economy of the Rong corresponds entirely with that of the other mountain peoples of South-East Asia and South China, *e.g.* the Miau. They were originally hunters who have taken over to farming. They have certainly not learnt the old agricultural economy from other peoples, but they absorbed into themselves the people who practised the arts of farming. Domestic animals are reared mainly for the purpose of sacrifice and not for any economic gain, and they are of the greatest importance. The combination of hunting with

farming must already have been effected by the Rong in very early times. 205 174

Gorer believes that the Rong were hunters about three hundred years ago, and that they carried on a little farming with dry rice and millet and kept a few cattle. When the Bhutanese and the Nepalese overran the land, the Lepchas withdrew into the forests, where they gave up farming and lived solely by hunting. When peace was restored they again took up to farming.[100]

(l) THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE RONG

There are two basic types among the Lepchas which 142 have to be clearly differentiated. The one with the long 141 small face, the high forehead, the high narrow nose, and the well-defined eye-brow prominences; the eye is mostly without the Mongolian fold (if the upper lid droops it does not cover the inner corner of the eye). The face is also well-modelled; the cheek bones are not very prominent. The form of the head is mesocephalic or dolichocephalic. These people are taller and somewhat above the average height. The colour of the skin is light yellow. (Fig. 45).

The other type has a wide short face, a wide low forehead, well-defined supra-orbital ridges, a broad nose with depressed root and cheek bones that are somewhat more prominent. The eye often shows the Mongolian fold. The lips are thin, the shape of the head is brachycephalic, and the colour of the skin light yellow. Both the types have a slight growth of beard and a scanty growth of hair all over the body. The Mongolian spot occurs among most of the children of both types. The Lepchas call the spot "ri-om" and say that children without the spot are delicate. (Fig. 46)

The Rong have well-proportioned bodies. The muscles of the thigh and calves are particularly well-formed because of the fact that they are tireless mountain climbers. On the average however, the Rong are more lightly built than the neighbouring people. The women have very finely cut features.

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[100] op. cit. p. 110.

144 174 In the anthropology of the Rong, a two-fold classification is shown : a Mongoloid and a non-Mongoloid element. Our investigation has shown us this two-fold element in the religion and the economy of the Lepchas. From an anthropological standpoint we would like to draw a line of difference between the hunters and the farmers, thus forming two typical groups. The hunters with their hunting religion, sociology and economy represent the tall Rong type and are characterised by the larger physical build, the long small face, the open eye and the long small high nose. The farmers, on the other hand constitute the second group with shorter physiques, broad faces, broad nose, Mongolian eyefold, and prominent cheek bones.

Thus we see that the Rong bear evidences of a mixed culture, and this helps to solve many contradictions concerning them. Some believe that they have connections with the Tibetans. Others say that they wandered from the east along the Burma-Assam mountains. Our own belief is that the hunting component of the Rong are the primitive indigenous inhabitants of the forests of Sikkim. The farmers came from the east and have connections with such people as the Naga, the Lolo and the Miau.

197 174 144 The Rong language belongs to the pure group, that is to say, to the pronounless Himalayan group of the Tibeto-Burman languages. This bears out the facts that they experienced no Austro-Asiatic influence in the language as the Limbu did. Consequently the Austro-Asiatics cannot be held responsible for the non-Mongoloid element among the Lepchas. The only possibility is that among the pure Tibeto-Burmans and in a wider sense among the Tibeto-Chinese, there is an element purely non-Mongoloid and another that is Mongoloid. The study of the Rong therefore throws light on the Mongoloid problem and shows a formation of the Mongoloids within the Tibeto-Chinese Family (Tibeto-Burman is the large sub-group of this family of languages) and, in a very marked manner, among the farming peoples. This is in perfect agreement with the results of our research in Tibet. I found that the Tibetan Mongoloids are represented among the farming population. The cattle breeding nomads have very few Mongoloid features or none at all. Hence it is that

in Tibet also, the Mongoloids are farmers. In the regions of 197
North-West China, in Tsing-hai and Kan-su, we found that in 174
many Chinese, living there, the Mongoloid element was 144
completely lacking or present in a very negligible manner. These people are also of a larger build; they have the long, high-bridged noses, the long narrow faces and in many cases the Mongolian fold is not to be found. One might object that this was due to the influence of non-Mongoloid peoples like the Tibetans and the Turks who repeatedly overran these districts and ruled over the people for long periods of time. We shall refer later to the Mongoloids in China. At this stage it can be said that in China, the pure Mongoloids came from the farming inhabitants in Eastern and Central China as we have proved in the first chapter. One cannot quote the Mongols as counter evidence, as they are a very mixed and younger culture with strong agricultural influences.

We shall not deal in a detailed manner with the customs 121
and habits of the Lepchas at birth, betrothal, marriage, death and burial. There is only one more point which I should
like to touch upon: the judging of the Lepchas through the 114
descriptions of European authors like Gorer and C.J. Morris. 831
The two authors describe these people as being dominated by a strong, a very strong, sex complex. J. H. Hutton remarks in his foreword to Gorer's book, "Another aspect of Lepcha
life which is almost as striking as the absence of aggression, [152]
is the apparent obsession of the whole community with sex. I was tempted to suppose that the author of this book had overemphasised the Lepchas' attitude to sex through an unconscious dramatisation, a journalistic dramatisation, if I may call it so, of a want of reticence on sexual matters of all kinds in a degree quite unfamiliar in his own society. The perusal, however, of Mr. Morris's book shows that I did Mr. Gorer an injustice. At the same time I am rather inclined to feel that the apparent preoccupation of the Lepchas with sex does not necessarily imply that the importance attached to it by them in their lives is proportionately theatrical. One is
inclined to wonder whether this consciousness of sex is the [161]
cause or the result of the Lepchas' declining population, a decline of which the Lepchas are acutely aware. Probably, if there is any such connection at all it is by now a vicious —

114 circle, but either alternative seems possible."[110] And Gorer
831 himself writes : "The Lepchas are much occupied with sex ;
it is the subject to much of their conversation and nearly all
[562] their humour ; it is regarded as almost as essential as food.
Sex is intended to be almost exclusively sensual and almost impersonal ; the culture makes no allowance for deep personal relationships passionately adhered to between sexual partners."[111]

In the first place we maintain that the sex instinct, the instinct that prompts a man to propagate his own kind, is a very strong one, natural to all peoples, and the Rong are no exceptions. It cannot be said of them that they are passionate in an extreme manner. The relationship that exists between
[562] male and female among all Asiatic peoples is different from that which prevails among the Europeans. The same is true of man and wife within the bond of marriage. The Lepchas are in no way alien to the general Asiatic picture. The method Gorer adopts to demonstrate his theory is wrong. He puts together the love affairs of a few individual Lepchas and with one unwarranted generalization he regards it as the average sexual standard of all Lepchas. Anyone could draw a similar picture of every nationality in the world if one would collect the "Chronique scandaleuse" of separate individuals and present it under the title "Sex Life of the Nation."[111a]

881 Gorer moreover states that the Lepchas believe or pretend
831 to believe that puberty of girls, the development of breasts
and menstruation occur only through sexual relationship
114 with a man or a supernatural creature, the Kandu Mung, who
562 is supposed to appear to the girl in order to make her sexually
mature. This, of course, would very rarely occur. Most girls about nine or ten years of age would have to be raped. It would appear that the men invented this story to make the women dependent on them, particularly if the female desired puberty to come on. This belief of Gorer however we could not ascertain in the very places where Gorer carried out his research. All the same we were able to check on it

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[110] op. cit. p. 27.

[111] op. cit. p. 332.

[111a] G. S. Ghurye, Sexual Behaviour of the American Female, Sociological Bulletin, Bombay 1954, Vol. III, No. 2, p. 168 sq.

in other places. The Rong women are not so simple as to be 831
taken in by such a man-made legend. They, on the contrary, 831
affirm that the sexual maturity of girls and the development 114
of the secondary sex characteristics occur without sexual re- 562
lationship with man. The only difference is that the breasts [827]
of the girl who had had sexual relationship with man would
produce some milk. The Maharaja of Sikkim and other
educated Sikkimese, who read Gorer's book, found his des-
cription to be a defamation of the Lepcha character.

The Lepchas are the descendants of the first brother 773
Lepcha, as reported above. They fall into three divisions, 101
which are named after the districts in which they live. The 619
Ilame Lepchas live in the Ilame district of Nepal; the Dan-
djung Lepchas on the other side of the Tista river in Sikkim ;
the Dam-sang Lepchas in Indian Sikkim and Bhutan. The
second brother was called God-she, and is the father of the
Jimdar tribe. The third was Meche, and he is the proto-
parent of the Meche. Each of these three have a different [197]
language.[112]

B. SIKKIM YAK-TAMBA

There is in Sikkim a class of people who are called Limbu 000
by the Nepalese and Tzong-pa by the Tibetans. They call themselves Yak-tamba, Ek-tamba and Ek-tambu. Tradition has it that, after the Lepchas, they are the oldest inhabitants of the place having settled there before the Tibetans and the Nepalese came to settle in the land. They are intermixed with the Rong in a very remarkable manner. At the present time they inhabit the land to the west as far as the river Arun as we have already pointed out before. They are regarded as divisions of the Limbu and bear a very close resemblance to them. The Yak-tamba have flatter faces and more Mongoloid features than the Lepchas.

C. THE BHODJA OF SIKKIM

The Tibetans who migrated into Sikkim are called the Sikkim Bhodja. Legend links the Tibetan Je-khye-bu-

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[112] cfr. the report of the Rai given above concerning the first parents and their three sons ; see p. 7, 38. Here we have the same content of the myth.

[pp. 110-159 not processed]

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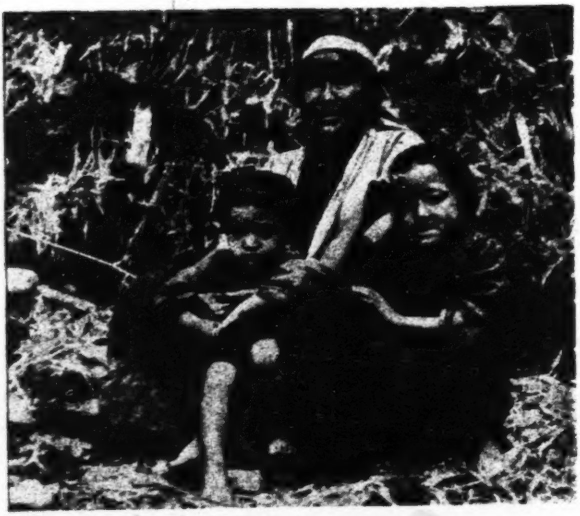

19. Lepcha grandmother with grandchildren

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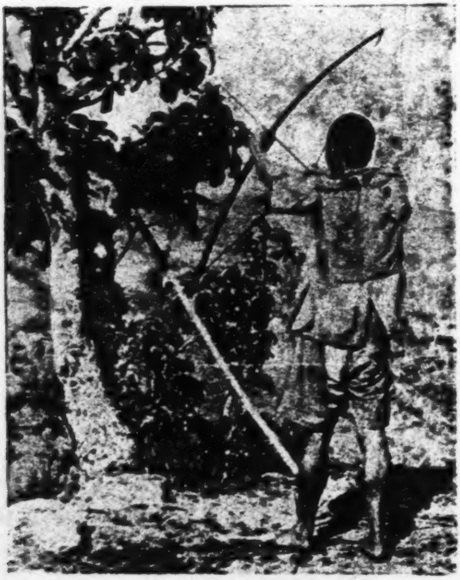


Fig. 20-21
see p. 61-62

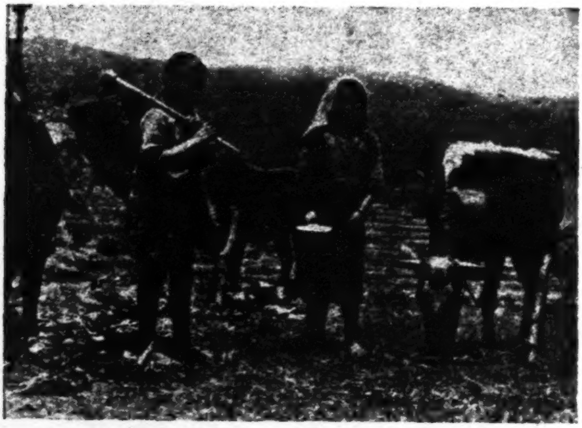
22. Lepcha hunter

[End Plate 8]
[End Plates 1-7 not processed]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954

AK5 Lepcha AK5

IX



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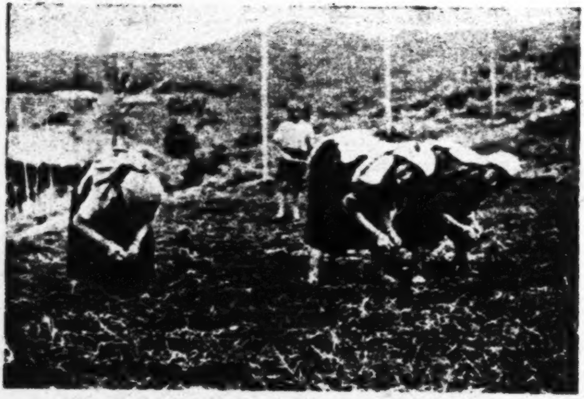
25. Lepcha children starting for field work



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26. Lepcha women planting rice

Fig. 23-24 p. 99

[End Plate 9]

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27. Lepcha farmer winnowing rice

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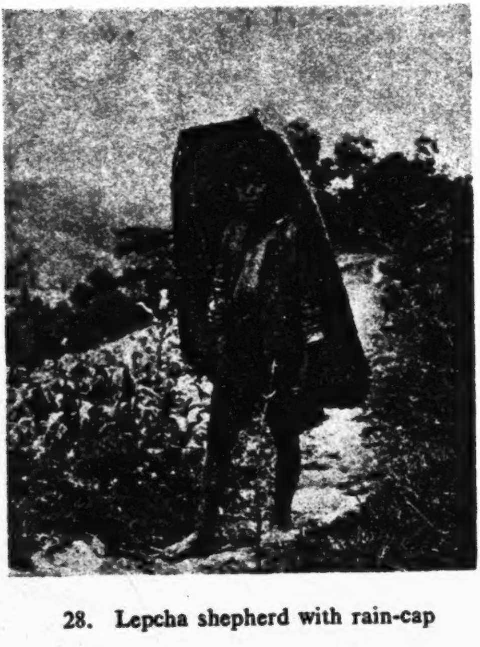

28. Lepcha shepherd with rain-cap

[End Plate 10]

XI

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29. Lepcha house

30. Lepcha house

[End Plate 11]

XII

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31. Lepcha house with stores

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32. Fenced Lepcha settlement

[End Plate 12]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954

AK5 Lepcha AK5

XIII

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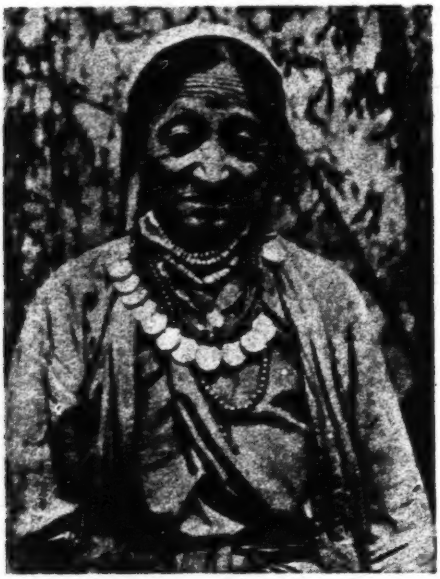
301



33. Lepcha woman

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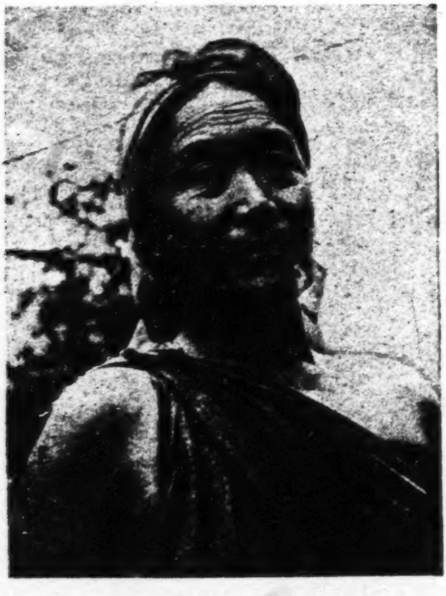

34. Lepcha woman

[End Plate 13]

XIV

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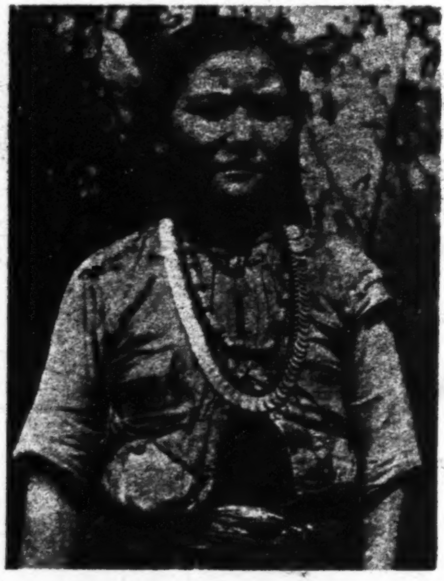
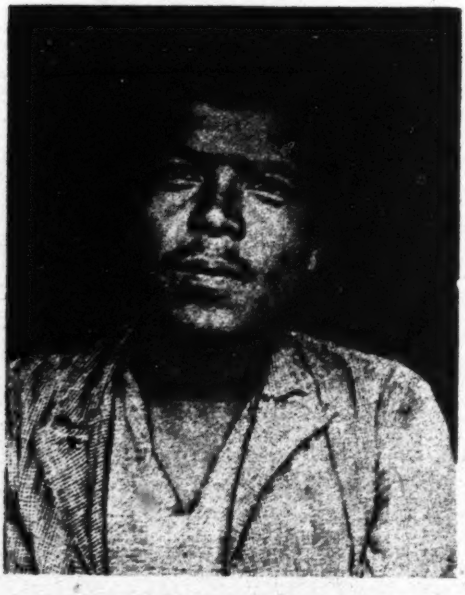


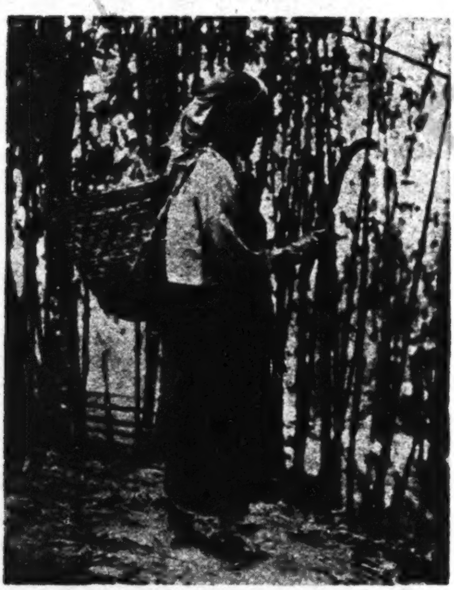
35. Lepcha young woman



36. Lepcha young man

[End Plate 14]

XV



37. Lepcha grandmother cutting bamboo

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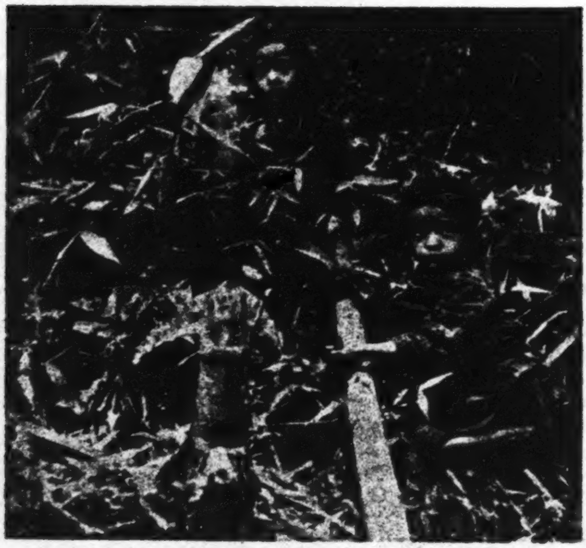

38. Lepcha children

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[End Plate 15]

XVI

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39. Lepcha girl cutting bamboo

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40. Cultivations of the Rai

[End Plate 16]

XVII

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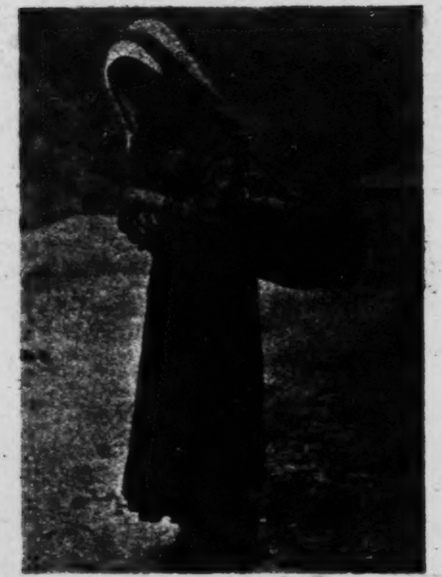

41. Lepcha mother carrying her baby

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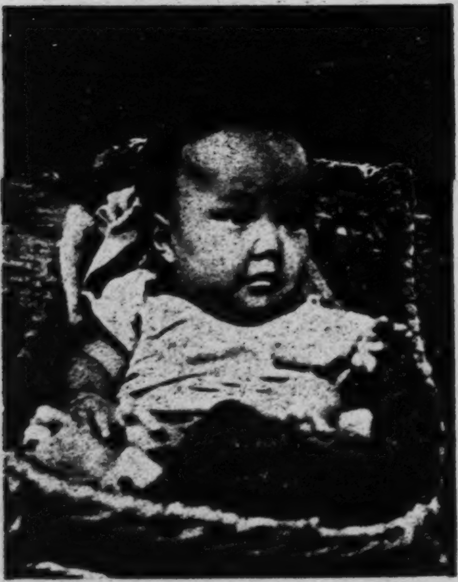

42. The baby in the cradle

[End Plate 17]

XVIII

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43. Lepcha girl carrying a baby

[302]

44. Lepcha girl

[End Plate 18]

XIX

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45. Lepcha man

46. Lepcha man

[End Plate 19]

[End Plates 20-38 not processed]